



HIT LIST

volume one/number five

november/december 1999

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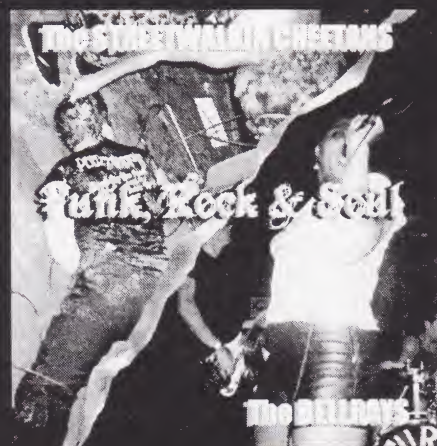
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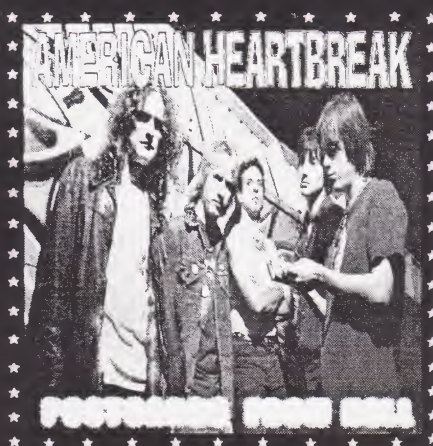
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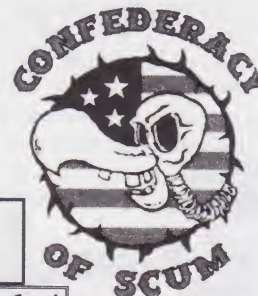
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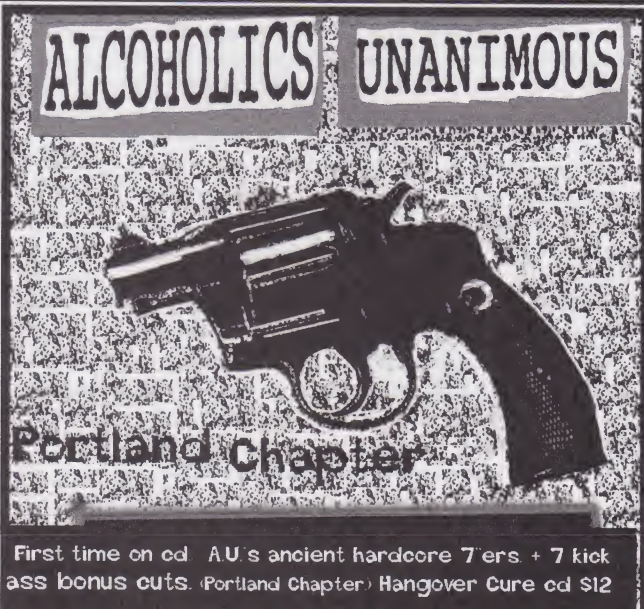


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Dear Jeff:

You assert that the long-term effects of regularly using the word "faggot" to apply to people who are not homosexuals will gradually alter the meaning of this word to one of merely general abuse like "jagoff" and "motherfucker". Your belief is that since no one today associates the word motherfucker with the action of "fucking one's mother", so too will "faggot" eventually shift its meaning away from one that is specific to homosexuals. Unfortunately, there is a very simple reason why this will never be true. It's because there is no recognizable group of people known as motherfuckers. There is no class of people known as jagoffs that we all agree live in that particular neighborhood where all the "jagoff bars" are. The fact that "faggot" will always retain its meaning has nothing to do with gay people themselves being determined to make it so. It retains its meaning because there IS a group of specific people to which this word applies. When you use the word against a disliked person known to be a heterosexual, you're not simply saying that this person is a low-down dirty rat. You are saying this person is SO LOW that they are equivalent to one of those dirty homosexuals. No matter how you approach it, the word still means that a "faggot" is a person to be hated. People have been applying this word to non-gay people for decades. I'm sure you could go back fifty years or longer and every boy in a gym class has probably had someone yell at him, "throw the ball, you faggot!" The kid he yells at doesn't have to actually BE gay, and yet the word hasn't changed its meaning. The meaning today is the same as it was fifty years ago, so when do you expect that this "gradual" change will take place? I sure would welcome the day when I can hear that word and know it doesn't mean me. But the sad fact is that today every kid in that gym class who IS gay and hears that word will also feel the full brunt of it inside his head. He'll know what that word means. It means that it is normal to hate kids like him. He'll notice that the coach will allow that word to be shouted, whereas if the kid had shouted "nigger" at someone (whether or not the person is actually black) the coach would have stopped the game to enforce discipline. So this gay kid who is feeling the pain of one of those "words that never hurt you" learns that he had just better keep all the pain bottled up inside of him, because the realization that there is no use for "faggots" in this world is made brutally real. Show me a kid who actually shouts back, "Yeah, I'm a faggot, ya wanna make something of it?", and I'll show you a rare, brave, and heroic kid. He'll also be one who'll have to be very strong, both mentally and physically, because he's about to have an entire school harass him mercilessly. That's because it's the

words that teach us who we are supposed to hate in the first place. Why else do you think that we have all these problems? You aren't merely born hating people, you have to learn that from somewhere. Jeff, when you write that if an individual doesn't already hate homosexuals, hearing the word "faggot" isn't going to make him attack one, it shows that you are not thinking about this issue all the way through. If you constantly hear the word "faggot" and you learn that these are the people to hate, when you are actually presented with a "faggot" you know from the get go, "Ah, these are the people that everyone hates. We don't want them around here. Let's go beat 'em up!" Unless, of course, you're the kid who happens to be the "faggot". Then you have to say to yourself, "holy crap, that word 'faggot' means people like me are hated." Yes, and that's exactly what gay kids learn. Why shouldn't they hate themselves? Their parents, their schools, their churches, their governments, and their oh-so-radical punk rock fanzines are also giving them the same message! They are getting that message, too, loud and clear. Gay teens are the largest percentage of teens who commit suicide.

It's an interesting coincidence that you were one of the first longhairs in Chicago. My lover was also. I asked him about it, and he said that he too was constantly verbally and physically attacked, just as you were. But when they shouted "faggot" at you, doesn't it occur to you that the reason it had no effect on you is because (duh) you knew the truth that you were not gay? I mean, when they shouted "communist" at my lover, he knew that he was not a communist, so of course it didn't have much of an effect on him. But when they shouted "faggot" at him, you better believe that that was something else! I'm sure you remember that back in those days people also used to say the word "nigger" a lot more than they do today. If you used it in connection with a person who wasn't black it still meant the same thing. "Niggers" are hated. We know who they are and what they look like. In the years since then, our society has moved forward so that this word "nigger" is no longer a commonly accepted insult word. We know today that to use this word is disrespectful and offensive to all black people. In fact it's offensive to all people in general. If it isn't, it should be. I once knew a white girl who used that word and insisted that she didn't mean "blacks" in general, but only that a certain kind of black person was a "nigger". She would say, "You know the kind. It's the kind who look and talk in a certain way." I didn't know what she meant then, and I still don't now. I'll bet that to the average black person her imagined distinction between "those" kinds of black people and "these" black people doesn't matter anyway, because as decent and intelligent men

and women we should know that we don't use this word. This is not a freedom of speech issue. The fact that this word "nigger" has dropped out of casual talk has not endangered our freedom of speech nor jeopardized our ability to communicate in any way. Can't gay people get the same consideration and respect from *Hit List*?

Words do change meanings over time, you're right about that. The word "faggot" has had its meaning changed once already. It used to mean "a bundle of sticks used for burning things". (Look it up in the dictionary!) The word changed its meaning when it became common to use those stick bundles to burn homosexual people. Eventually it was the homosexuals themselves that became known as the "faggots", those people that we burn to death for their sinful evils. I for one think it's about time that we change the meaning of this word yet again. This time let's change it from one that people feel comfortable to use anytime they want, to one with the same gravity as "nigger", which is today a word that is rightly unacceptable. You could do a lot by stop trying to rationalize away the use of the word "faggot" in your magazine. We don't need to censor it completely from the pages nor make insensitivity to this word a "crime". All I ask is that you recognize the damage that the casual usage of this word can do and concede that by defending it vigorously, as you've been doing, you are also, perhaps unintentionally, doing your part to perpetuate the damage that this word inflicts on us all, gay and straight.

Tony Arena
(aka Anonymous Boy)
c/o Homopunk World
Fanzine
PO Box 1502
Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10011

Dear Tony:

Thanks for the thoughtful letter. You may be surprised to learn that I agree with many of your basic points, e.g., that the term "faggot" has an identifiable reference point, unlike "jagoff", and that the term has long been used to insult heterosexuals. I'm also well aware of the term's etymological origins and developmental history (although none of this rules out the likelihood of future shifts in the term's meaning). In certain instances, however, I believe that it is you who hasn't quite thought the issues all the way through, and in your concluding sentence you unfortunately couldn't resist falling back upon the usual overwrought rhetoric about the "damage" caused by words.

Let me begin by stating what should already be obvious. Here at *Hit List* no one is trying to legitimize the uncritical and generalized usage of

the term "faggot", much less something as odious as gay bashing. As far as I'm concerned, anyone who attacks someone else solely because they're a homosexual is an imbecile of the highest order, and anyone who makes an unprovoked attack on an innocent person—gay or straight—deserves to be severely punished. Second, the overwhelming majority of the people associated with our magazine never use the term "faggot" in a pejorative way, either publicly or privately, and the two or three people who do occasionally employ the term do so primarily for effect, either to punctuate a point they're trying to make or to purposely offend certain hypersensitive segments of our readership. As you may recall, assuming that you read my "mission statement" for the zine in the debut issue of *Hit List*, one of our primary goals is to break cultural taboos of all sorts, regardless of who we offend in the process, and by now it should be perfectly clear that I am unalterably opposed to censorship in any form. The only things that will be excised from our zine are mindless or vicious personal attacks on other individuals and subjects which have no relevance whatsoever to our musical focus and cultural milieu. It should also be pointed out that some of our contributors are themselves gay or bisexual, and as far as I can tell none of them are of the "self-hating" sort. To me, it is absolutely irrelevant whether someone is heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual, since I don't have any animosity whatsoever toward anyone on the basis of their sexual orientation. (If I didn't have so many typical "hetboy" hangups I might even be bisexual myself, but for better or worse I'm only attracted to women. I certainly don't have any "moral" qualms about homosexuality.)

Turning to some specifics, you argue that the reason why I wasn't upset when assorted morons called me a "faggot" was because I knew that I wasn't gay. Your point seems to be that insults can only hurt if they're actually applicable to the recipient or are otherwise on target. I think you are greatly oversimplifying, if not distorting, psychological realities here. Let me illustrate my point with some personal anecdotes. Jocks and other squares used to regularly call me a "dirty hippie" and, later, a "punk rock weirdo". I may not have been all that "dirty" or "weird", but I was in fact a hippie and, later on, a punk rocker. Using your logic, I should have felt terribly hurt because my verbal abusers had accurately labelled me. But I wasn't, and for a very simple reason—I was *proud* to be both a hippie and a punk rocker. The operative factor in whether an insult actually affects or has the capacity to hurt someone is whether or not they feel a sense of shame about what they are called. If I had been ashamed to be associated with the hippie or punk countercultures, I may well have felt very uncomfortable being publicly called such names. On the other hand, it's perfectly possible to allow oneself to be offended by insults that are wholly false. I once almost got into a fistfight with some-

one who called my mother a whore because on some level it apparently made me feel ashamed, even though it was completely inaccurate. The lesson here should be clear. The reason why many homosexuals suffer emotional "pain" when they hear the word "faggot" is because deep down they seem to be ashamed of their own sexual orientation. The real solution, then, is not to ban the word "faggot", since that doesn't get at the root of the problem, but rather to inculcate the idea that no one should be ashamed of being a homosexual. Why the hell should they, regardless of whether mainstream society approves of their sexual preferences? There's nothing at all wrong with being gay. And even though it probably wouldn't be wise in most circumstances for a gay teen to openly challenge abusive jocks by saying, "Yeah, I'm a faggot. Ya wanna make something of it?," as you accurately point out, they should at least be saying to themselves, "Yeah, I am a faggot, and I'm proud of it. If you ignoramuses don't like it, that's too fucking bad." If someone isn't ashamed of what they are, insulting words can't "harm" them at all, unless they are followed up by acts of physical violence.

Furthermore, one must distinguish between the general "appropriateness" of employing particular insulting words and the *legality* of doing so. I'd be the first to acknowledge that the majority of people who regularly and abusively use terms like "nigger", "faggot", "honky", and "cunt" to refer to blacks, gays, whites, or women are stupid, insensitive morons. But such morons certainly have a legal right to utilize such terms if they wish to, no matter who they may offend in the process (just as other sorts of jackasses have the right to employ inane terms like "people of color", "differently abled", "lookism", and "wymyn", or even to falsely and abusively smear everyone who disagrees with them as a "racist, sexist homophobe")—at least until such time as the PC "thought police" are able to circumvent the Constitution and make it "illegal" to use what they propagandistically refer to as "hate speech". (In my personal Ambrose Bierce-inspired lexicon, "hate speech" is best defined as "speech that someone else hates", but that's another story.) It's even more ridiculous when hypersensitive individuals and special interest groups seek to ban the use of terms like "nigger" and "faggot" when they are used in idiosyncratic, unconventional, or satirical ways that any sensible person would be able to distinguish clearly from their standard bigoted usages. Surely gay people, even those within the insular, incestuous punk scene, have more pressing concerns than worrying about whether Joey Vindictive used the term "faggot" for literary effect in one of his *HL* columns.

One last point deserves to be made. The fact is that you can't expect everyone in the world to approve of homosexuality or welcome homosexuals with open arms. Apart from the fact that most people's feelings about sexuality stem from very deep emotional wellsprings which they them-

selves are not usually fully cognizant of (much less in control of), the fact remains that homosexuality also conflicts in a fundamental way with the teachings and moral values underlying many of the world's most influential religions, not to mention the cultural values characteristic of many of the world's civilizations. As such it's hardly surprising to discover that many devout Christians view homosexuality as a mortal sin, even if they manage to find it in their hearts to befriend individual homosexuals. It follows that if otherwise decent people with these sorts of religious-based prejudices are not allowed to criticize, ridicule, and demean particular aspects of the homosexual lifestyle, which among other things may sometimes cause them to use offensive terms like "faggot", why should other people with equally strong anti-religious prejudices—including certain gay activists—be allowed to criticize, ridicule, and demean some of the central features of Christianity or to label all Christians as "superstitious bigots"? Once again, what's good for the gander should also be good for the geese. In my opinion, members of both groups should be permitted to express their views openly. If you live in a pluralistic society that permits freedom of expression, you're going to be regularly exposed to all sorts of "offensive" ideas and remarks, so you'd better learn to deal with it.

The bottom line is that it's not really necessary that everyone else love, tolerate, and fully accept homosexuals (or, for that matter, heterosexuals, Catholics, Nazis, communists, Moonies, or punk rockers). The only thing that should never be tolerated is when members of these or other groups, individually or collectively, are deprived of their basic constitutional rights (including the right to free speech), tangibly discriminated against, or subjected to physical violence. I think that people who commit these very real crimes should be punished to the fullest extent of the law, but using insensitive, offensive terms like "nigger", "peckerwood", or "faggot" is not a "crime", serious or otherwise, and should not be characterized as such. Generally, it's just kind of stupid. To suggest that homosexuals need special legally-sanctioned linguistic "protection" is to imply that they all have weaker than average characters, which is hardly showing them the "consideration and respect" that you are demanding that others give them. In the final analysis, if the worst thing that ever happens to you is to be called a "faggot", even on a semi-regular basis, you're a helluva lot better off than the majority of us, gay or straight.

—Jeff Bale

P.S. —From now on, reactions to Joey's column should be sent directly to him at PO Box 183, Franklin Park, IL 60131-0183. All I've been doing is vociferously defending his (and our magazine's) freedom of speech, no matter how "offensive" that speech may be. I have nothing further to add regarding this matter.



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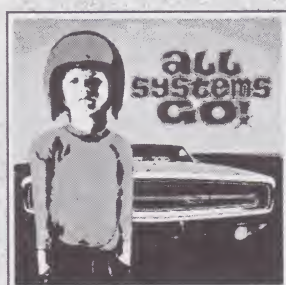
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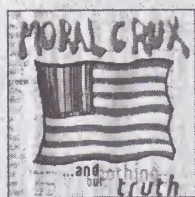
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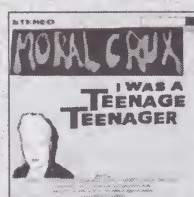
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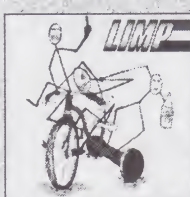
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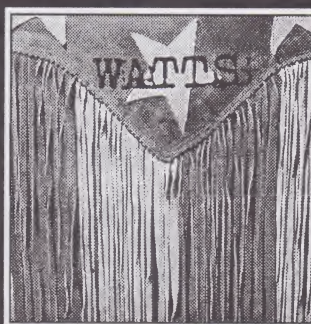
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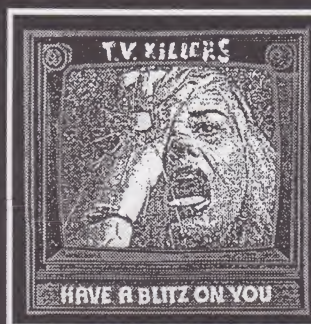
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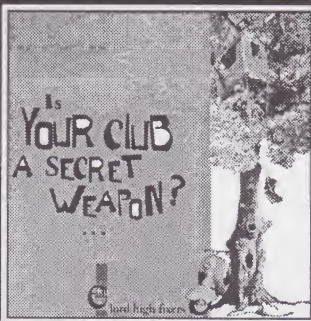
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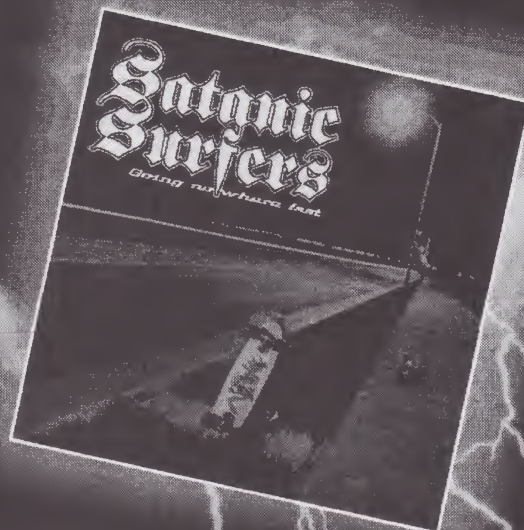


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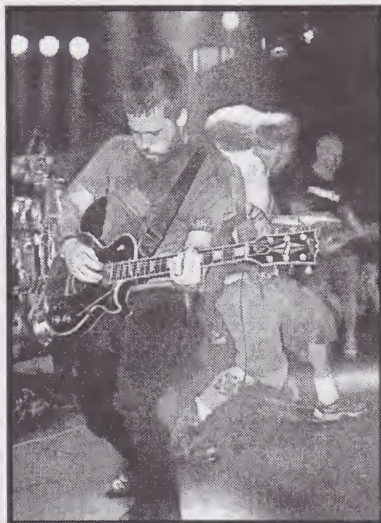
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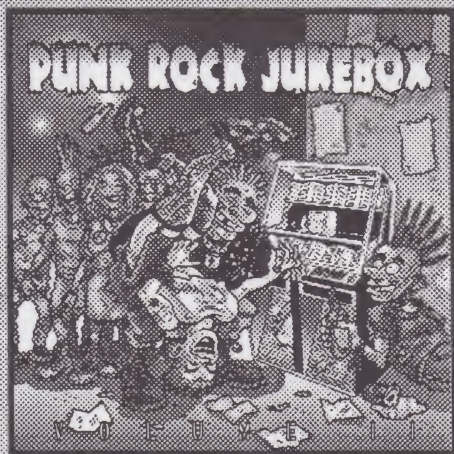
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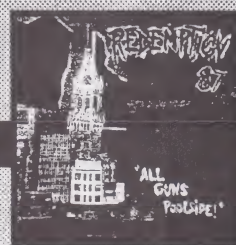
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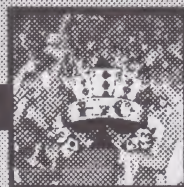
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For the past few weeks I've been preoccupied with moving from San Francisco to Newport Beach, where I'll be staying for the next nine months, as well as with preparing and teaching my Fall quarter courses. Given the necessity of expending a great deal of time and energy on these less-than-thrilling activities, I originally didn't plan to write anything other than the musical portion of my column in this issue. Alas, Vic Bondi just couldn't leave me alone. He couldn't resist firing a few salvos across my bow, albeit admittedly in response to a few salvos I previously fired across his bow. Will these preliminary warning shots lead to a decisive battle of world-historical importance such as Trafalgar, or merely (and far more likely) to a tactically indecisive, blustery confrontation like Jutland? Only time will tell. In any case, once again Vic has prompted me to respond to some of his arguments - in the main arguments that he has put forth in this very issue - lest anyone get the false impression that I am the musical equivalent of a dinosaur who is promoting sonic stasis, wallowing in the musical past, defending the punk status quo, or trying to hinder the development of a new musical-cultural revolution capable of administering a much-needed enema to mainstream society. If that's the impression I've somehow given to our most perceptive readers, perhaps I'd better endeavor to clarify a few things.

Let's begin with a relatively minor point. In the column (in *HL* #3) where I sought to distinguish analytically between the different categories of punks, with a view toward explaining why so many eventually became disillusioned and dropped out of the scene, I did not claim that any of these general categories were composed of "faux" punks, as opposed to true punks. My point was that, unlike us "rock 'n' roll maniacs", punks who were attracted to the punk scene for other than primarily musical reasons were "fair weather fans" of punk rock music. I stand by that claim. Note also that I did not attempt to associate Vic with any of my hypothesized "ideal typical" categories, in part because like most complex, "really existing" people he probably never fell definitively into a single one of those categories. (It should be recalled that I went out of my way to point out that these categories were not even fully discrete, much less mutually exclusive.) However, I did suggest that he was not a "rock 'n' roll maniac" in the sense that I defined it, which helps to explain why he doesn't still love the old-school and garage punk rock musical subgenres. One can be a punk, attitude-wise, without being addicted to punk rock music, which is why I referred to him as a "punk" but denied that he was nowadays a "punk rocker". To my way of thinking, being a "punk rocker" means (among other things) that you have to love punk rock music. Since Vic has repeatedly indicated that he is no longer a devotee of these seminal styles of punk rock music, how can he be legitimately described as a "punk rocker", with an emphasis on the "rocker" part of the phrase? Even so, I certainly have no interest, vested or otherwise, in turning him into a punk rock "outcast" - if anything, he voluntarily cast himself out.

Of course, all this is merely a trivial issue of labelling. What really matters is that we clearly have different attitudes about the present merits of punk rock as a musical style. In this connection, I feel

bound to correct some mischaracterizations of my views regarding musical change and evolution. In theory, I am in no sense opposed to musical experimentation, a process which I regard as not only inevitable but desirable. After all, without some degree of experimentation or innovation, coupled with the impulse to destroy mainstream rock and all the sterility then associated with it, modern punk rock itself would never have been created in the mid-70s. Nor would other types of hard-edged rock 'n' roll that I love, including beat and 60's punk. In the absence of any musical evolution, us rock 'n' rollers would all still be listening to rockabilly! I am also well aware (sometimes painfully so) of the distinction between "players" and "listeners", and recognize that as "players" devel-

JEFF BALE READ BETWEEN THE LINES



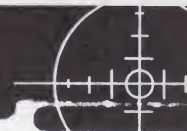
op into better musicians most of them are no longer satisfied with churning out the same three or four chords that they had earlier found so exciting and compelling. (Nevertheless, other musicians actually prefer to keep things primitive and rockin' - here I don't think one can overlook the influence exerted by each individual's unique emotional makeup and personality structure - and I feel certain that I myself would be among that much smaller group of "primitivists" if I was a "player".) Moreover, I would love to see a new form of rock 'n' roll music develop that turned out to be even better and more subversive than punk rock once was. In that sense I do not favor stasis and

am far from satisfied with the existing musical status quo. Hence, Vic's remarks notwithstanding, I don't think that I can fairly be characterized as the musical equivalent of neoconservative "end of ideology" theorists like Daniel Bell.

In practice, however, things are somewhat more complicated. No one with a burning passion for particular types of music can view any and all musical changes in a positive light, irrespective of the form those changes actually take. Certain types of changes and developments will be welcomed,

whereas others will undoubtedly be viewed as abhorrent and resisted. It should never be forgotten that musical tastes, like one's preferences for certain types of food or sex partners, are entirely subjective. They are not subject to rational debate, like ideas, nor can they be altered through a simple act of will. For example, I love Coca Cola, Adams natural peanut butter, mayonnaise, refried beans, pasta, medium rare burgers, artichokes, gaunt Goth-looking (not to mention neurotic) women with nice legs, horror films, and primitive rock 'n' roll, whereas I can't abide Pepsi Cola, coconuts, pickle relish, liver, pepperoni, lobster, sushi, "large and lovely" Rubenesque women, opera,

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or jazz. That's just the way things are, and even if I wanted to alter these particular preferences - which I have no desire to do - it would probably not be possible short of the systematic application of tortuous Pavlovian stimulus-response methods. The tangible effect of this purely subjective quality of musical taste is that, while I'm certainly not opposed to change in the abstract, and whereas I even welcome certain musical developments when they occur, most of what passes for change and experimentation in rock music is anathema to me. Just as I would not welcome a new food trend that involved putting mayonnaise on top of ice cream, no matter how "innovative" or "radical" it might be portrayed, so too do I not welcome "innovative" or "radical" musical formats that involve the large-scale abandonment of the basic, stripped-down rock 'n' roll beats and structures that I'm addicted to. Nor do arguments that such "novel" formats are more complex, sophisticated, artistic, or technical move me in the slightest, just as the fact that *foix gras* requires real artistry to prepare does not cause me to be able to gag it down - much less to prefer it to a host of eateries that are far more basic and simple to prepare, such as pollo asado burritos or baked potatoes. Personally, I

couldn't care less whether free-form jazz is infinitely more complex and difficult to play than rock 'n' roll, because the bottom line is that even hearing it for a few seconds makes me wince in the very same way that chalk screeching across a blackboard does. The same is true for arty-farty experimental crap. On one occasion I actually had to stop shopping for records (my favorite pastime) and exit a record store because some jackass put a John Zorn record on the sound system. Listening to that horrible, pretentious garbage was like being tortured.

However, it does not follow from this that I'm opposed to experimentation within the (admittedly narrower) parameters of primitive rock 'n' roll itself. If that were the case, all I'd be listening to today is hard-edged beat music or, maybe, 60's punk. Far from wallowing in musical nostalgia, I'm always actively looking for, and indeed hoping to discover, interesting new wrinkles within the fairly circumscribed boundaries of basic, gut-level rock 'n' roll. If I wasn't, I would never have become addicted to 77-style punk, garage punk, Oi, glam punk, pop punk, power pop, or NIRVANA. If someone had asked me in 1971, I probably would have said that 60's punk was the be-all and end-all of rock 'n' roll; its musical cul-de-sac, because at that time I couldn't even conceive of the emergence of a new type of rock 'n' roll that was still more primitive and aggressive. But I was obviously

wrong to have believed that back then, and I may well be wrong to believe that about 77-influenced or garage punk at the present time. In fact, I actually hope that my imagination is deficient in this respect, and that some rockin' shit that's even better does eventually emerge. If so, I'll undoubtedly be among the first to embrace it, just as I was in 1964 and 1976. Having said that, it's very difficult for me to imagine anything that could turn out to be "louder, faster, and shorter" than punk which nonetheless manages to retain the aggressive, primitive, obnoxious, and hook-laden features of rock 'n' roll that I've always adored. Once musical structures begin to get too

complex, they soon cease to be recognizable as rock 'n' roll. And if they get too much faster than uptempo old school punk, they quickly start to dissolve into indistinguishable "white noise". In that sense the boundaries of primitive rock 'n' roll can't be stretched indefinitely. But they can and perhaps even should be stretched as far as possible, as long as this doesn't involve abandoning that genre's most essential and characteristic features and qualities.

To sum up, I'm certainly not trying to discourage any musicians from experimenting or innovating. All I'm saying is that in all probability I personally will not end up liking the results of their experiments. (After all, even Vic was forced to acknowledge that most such musical experiments fail. However, acknowledging this

reality is not the same thing as insisting that such experiments should not be attempted, especially since at least some of them will turn out to be wonderful.) However that may be, surely my subjective opinions about their musical direction will not deter any "players" from experimenting. Nor should they. I feel certain, for example, that Frank Discussion is not terribly concerned about the fact that I personally can't imagine liking his current Afro-Cuban "Brazil 666" musical explorations. Creative, idiosyncratic people are going to march to the sound of their own drums regardless of what anyone else thinks, and that's exactly how it should be.

Parenthetically, one main reason why I think I've been able to avoid becoming a de facto musical "dinosaur" is that I vastly prefer going to see less popular underground bands playing aggressive rock 'n' roll in front of tiny but enthusiastic crowds of cogniscenti. These sorts of gigs are usually held in smaller, sordid, atmospheric "dives" populated by heavy drinkers over the age of 21, the type of environment that I find especially conducive to the optimally hedonistic rock 'n' roll experience. I really can't stand attending all-ages gigs in huge arenas, which is one main reason why I invariably lose interest in bands that either 1) "evolve" so much that they transcend the boundaries of rock 'n' roll altogether, or 2) play formulaic, note-by-number punk of the type that's guaranteed to appeal to large numbers of

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sheeple wearing baggy pants and backwards baseball caps. (Yuk! Even if one was so wasted as to be virtually catatonic, as I get once or twice a year, it would still be impossible to enjoy a gig in the midst of such wholesale dorkiness.) I also generally go out of my way to avoid seeing punk rock "has-beens" who are desperately trying to make a comeback or cash in on nostalgia in order to belatedly obtain the "filthy lucre" that they sadly (and often unjustifiably) failed to garner the first time around. Wild horses couldn't have dragged me to see the reformed PISTOLS a few years back, nor to attend the recent "Social Chaos" tour. (On the other hand, one can never go wrong seeing the reformed REAL KIDS, DICTATORS, VIBRATORS, or PRETTY THINGS, and I'm definitely going to the "Las Vegas Grind" show on Halloween weekend.) By constantly seeking out newly-formed underground rock 'n' roll bands and new thrills, one can perhaps avoid falling into the type of regressive musical rut that Vic and others would like to "destroy". To be a real punk may well mean seeking to destroy the truly odious aspects of the musical status quo, but before one totally rejects that which exists (including that which remains worthwhile) something that actually seems *better* has to be envisioned, not just something different. Novelty for its own sake is not necessarily a virtue. For example, embracing disco was not the way to rejuvenate rock 'n' roll in the mid-1970s, and embracing electronica is not the way to rejuvenate it at the end of the millenium. At the moment, I personally can't even begin to envision what form a new type of primitive rock 'n' roll that might be capable of replacing or rejuvenating what currently passes for the status quo in punk rock will take, and in the meantime I'm going to continue listening to good punk rock, old and new.

Speaking of punk rock "has-beens", I feel compelled to say a few final words in response to a comment Vic made last issue. He said he couldn't understand why anyone who was under 18 would read *Hit List* (or, presumably, *Flipside* and *MRR*), since most of our contributors are at least approaching middle age. He also claimed that he himself had no respect for anything when he was a teenager. If this is actually true, the world is in an even sadder and more pathetic state than even I had previously imagined. Let's respond to his second claim first. I don't believe for one minute that the 18-year old Vic Bondi didn't have any respect for anything. If he was anything like me at that age, and I imagine that he was, he sure as hell didn't respect very much, but there was probably at least one thing that he did respect: knowledge. When I was a young, alienated, and extremely rebellious "problem child", I always had an enormous amount of respect for knowledge itself, and for those people, including my otherwise hated elders, who genuinely possessed it. That was probably the only damn thing in the entire world that I did respect, especially since most self-appointed "authorities" did not possess a great deal of it. The fact that Vic later wrote unusually intelligent song lyrics and obtained a Ph.D. in history leads me to surmise that, if nothing else, he was an avid reader and someone who valued knowledge for its own sake even when he was younger. If so, he actually *did* respect something, unlike so many troubled and/or stupid youths who have no interest in the wider world and no respect at all for learning.

If we extrapolate a bit from Vic's own probable attitudes as a callow youth, there is no reason at all to assume that teenagers within the punk scene, at least those who value learning and respect knowledge, wouldn't be interested in reading *Hit List*. If I was a teenager

who loved primitive rock 'n' roll with a passion, and I wanted to learn more about its various permutations (as well as, perhaps, other political, social, and cultural matters), I would certainly be an avid *HL* reader. Why? Because many of our writers are authentic experts on these musical and cultural topics. Not all of us are walking, talking rock 'n' roll encyclopedias like Mike Stax, Johan Kugelberg, and (presumably) Tim Warren, but several of us have been listening to underground rock 'n' roll and/or been associated with various music-oriented countercultures for twenty to thirty years, which if nothing else has enabled us to acquire a storehouse of experiences and knowledge that younger people, no matter how bright or perceptive, simply cannot match. If it's really true that today's p-rock teens have no interest in learning anything at all, then Vic's undoubtedly right - they probably wouldn't be interested in buying or reading *HL*. But our magazine isn't really designed to be read by voluntary ignoramuses, slackers, or losers of that ilk, regardless of their ages. As far as I'm concerned, people who have no respect for knowledge, no burning desire to learn, and no interest in thinking about larger issues are just taking up unnecessary space on this already overcrowded planet. Since they're making no effort at all to expand their mental horizons or develop their potential, not unlike protozoa or (for that matter) inanimate objects, why should anyone else give a flying fuck about them or their lame-ass attitudes? I certainly don't.

FOR THOSE ABOUT TO PUNK OUT, I SALUTE YOU

This issue my self-appointed task is to evaluate some of the "freakbeat" records that have been reissued in recent years. Before turning to specific releases, however, I feel compelled to try and resolve some ongoing problems concerning the actual meaning of the term "freakbeat". But first, I have a confession to make. As recently as last summer, I had no idea at all what the label "freakbeat" actually referred to, even though I've long been familiar with many of the bands and records that I've since learned supposedly fall into this particular musical category. I remember asking Mark Murmann what the hell the term referred to, and he too seemed to be a bit confused

about its exact meaning and significance. It now appears that the word was first coined in the 1980s by British rock musicologists who were collecting long out-of-print 45's for reissue compilations that were designed to showcase a type of transitional, hybrid music that briefly came to the fore in Britain (and continental Europe) between late 1965 and early 1967, during that all too short interval between the earlier Beat and later Psychedelic

eras. Perhaps the best preliminary attempt to clarify the precise meaning of the term can be found on the (borrowed) liner notes on the "Maximum Freakbeat" compilation CD:

"Do not confuse Freakbeat with powerful powerful Beat or R'n'B, even if embellished with a great guitar solo: what's required is a loss of control - pounding drums, dynamic throbbing bass, guitar feedback with distortion and slashing chords, as defined by the seminal early Who...Our class of '66 were angry, psychotic and aggressive."

Our magazine isn't really designed to be read by voluntary ignoramuses, slackers, or losers of that ilk, regardless of their ages.

HIT SQUAD

On the front cover of the very same comp - not coincidentally, the best and most authentic existing collection of genuine freakbeat music - can be found the words "Feedback! Fuzz! Distortion! and Mayhem!", which are all too appropriate for the great music found therein. Sadly, the label "freakbeat" has since been applied more and more carelessly and extravagantly to an ever-growing array of 60's reissues, so much so that its real meaning and proper usage have become even more confused. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of the so-called "freakbeat" records that have been released in the past

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VOLUME ONE

few years do not contain music that meets these key definitional criteria.

So let's begin by shedding further light on the subject, shall we? First of all, freakbeat is in many respects the British equivalent of "psychedelic punk" in the US. Just as "psych punk" was a short-lived transitional form of music that was common between late 1966 and early 1968, i.e., between the heydays of the (60's) Punk and Psychedelic eras, so too was freakbeat a short, transitional phase between British beat and psychedelia. And I think it's safe to say that these new subgenres developed for the very same reasons on both sides of the Atlantic - members of 60's punk and European beat groups began ingesting massive quantities of psychedelic drugs, which caused their mental horizons to expand (or go haywire) and induced them to experiment with sonic textures in novel ways. However, as soon as those sonic experiments and musical innovations progressed so far that they departed too much from the primitive rock 'n' roll format that lay at the root of punk and beat music, they either "evolved" into arty-farty psychedelic noodling or assumed a commercialized form as wimpy "psychedelic pop". In both cases, the damage to rock 'n' roll was for a time irreparable. Second, I don't think it's technically correct to categorize the very early WHO as a freakbeat band, since only a couple of their studio recordings degenerated into moody, out-of-control rave-ups. Finally, and intimately related to both of the points above, true freak-

beat has to have at least a bit of a psychedelic feel to it. Otherwise wild guitar rave-ups such as those typical of the live WHO and the early R&B-based YARDBIRDS could also be characterized as freakbeat, which I believe would represent a considerable overextension of the term. It's hard to define precisely what a "psychedelic feel" is (especially to straight edgers who've decided to voluntarily limit potentially fulfilling life experiences), but everyone who has had some personal familiarity with the effects of drugs can recognize it when they hear it.

Perhaps the best way to distinguish between freakbeat, beat, and the sound of the early WHO, which I think is best referred to as "modbeat", would be to sit down and carefully listen to a recently-released collection of terrific material by the GAME. In the very same way that the different strata at archaeological sites reveal successive phases in the evolutionary history of particular cultures, this GAME



CD provides the listener with a clear aural picture of the evolutionary development of successive British musical styles between 1964 and 1968, ranging from pure beat music all the way up to heavy psych, with stops along the way in the modbeat and freakbeat phases. To be still more specific, basic beat can be heard on "But I Do" and "Gotta Keep On Moving Baby"; heavy-guitar modbeat on "Gonna Get Me Someone", "Gotta Wait", and (the first version of) "The Addicted Man"; freakbeat - dig the fuzz bass and guitar distortion, baby - on "Help Me Mummy's Gone", "It's Shocking What They Call Me", and (the second version of) "The Addicted Man"; and loud psych on "Lavender Grove" and "When I Was Young". (The three remaining songs were recorded in 1996, and thus should be left out of this particular discussion.) As a listener who is quite familiar with all these types of music, the differences between these particular genres and subgenres seem fairly obvious. The problem lies solely in agreeing on general labels for them - a problem that could be resolved immediately if the other self-styled "experts" would

only agree to use my own simple scheme! Now that we've laid some definitional foundations, let's have a look at some of the existing collections of so-called freakbeat music. Perhaps the best place to begin would be with Greg Shaw's "English Freakbeat" compilations, which may have been among the very first to use that particular label. Whatever else may be said about these collections, which in truth contain lots of rockin' music amongst the more pedestrian offerings, they hardly contain any genuine freakbeat music. In that sense they are misleadingly labelled, an error that many subsequent compilers have consciously or unwittingly repeated.

Purple Pill

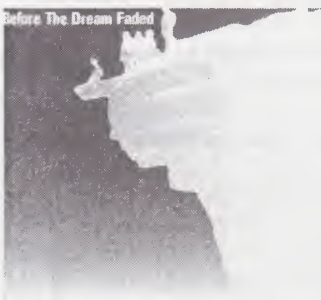


Eaters

Sixteen British Freakbeating luss monsters from the sixties

One of the more interesting characteristics of the "English Freakbeat" comps is that each volume - excepting volume 5 - contains one song that is so damned amazing that all the others thereon, even the good ones, pale by comparison. These particularly outstanding tracks are the CHASERS' "Inspiration" on volume 1, MICKEY FINN's "Garden of My Mind" on volume 2, the FAVOURITE SONS' "Walking Walking Walking" on volume 3, SHANE RUSSELL & THREE's tremendous version of OTIS READING's "Security" on volume 4 (perhaps the best ever ROLLING STONES soundalike track), and DAVID JOHN & THE MOOD's "Diggin' for Gold" on volume 6 (not coincidentally, the name adopted for another great 60's comp series, reviewed in HL # 3), which was originally a volume in the "Pebbles" series. Equally interesting is the fact that all five of those songs have pronounced freakbeat elements,

although perhaps only the CHASERS, MICKEY FINN, and FAVOURITE SONS tracks can be considered full-blown freakbeat numbers. However, although the best tracks are generally "freaky", the only thing these comps generally have in common is that they contain material by British bands from the 1963-7 era. Very little Merseybeat or powerchord modbeat appear on them, either; the bulk of the songs can best be characterized as hard-edged but derivative R&B-style beat, with the occasional bizarre track thrown in for good measure (such as JASON EDDIE & THE CENTREMEN's psychotic version of "Singing the Blues"). Even so, as per usual Greg deserves credit for being among the first to pioneer the reissuing of old UK beat tracks, which helped to kick-start a kind of "neo-beat" craze.



THE MISUNDERSTOOD

Includes, Rarities, Obscurities and Never Before Released Tracks

Equally strange is the "Freakbeat Freakout" compilation on Sequel, which contains almost no examples of genuine freakbeat. The only songs which even approximate that distinctive hybrid style are the SORROWS' "Let Me In", though it lacks a bona fide psych feel, and a TROGGS track dating from 1972 (which isn't really surprising since the latter band always had a killer psych-punk guitar sound and a drug-addled vibe)! In the case of this collection, as with Decca's "Freakbeat Scene" volume in their overpriced reissue series, the name "freakbeat" seems to have been selected mainly because it was

thought to be a "hip" label that might help to shift units. It's not that there aren't some excellent songs herein, mainly pounding R&B stompers with loud and/or fuzzy guitars by the BLUE RONDOS, SIMON RAVEN, the CLIQUE, and the MONTANAS, as well as cool covers of "We Ain't Got Nothing Yet", "Hungry", and "Tell Her" - they just aren't examples of true freakbeat, which is understandable when one notices that most of them were recorded in 1964, 1965, or early 1966, i.e., before the short-lived freakbeat era even began. I mean, what person in his right mind would put a wimpy white soul track like the MED-DYEVILS' "It's All For You" or TONY DANGERFIELD & THE THRILLS' rockabilly-ish "She's Too Way Out" on a comp supposedly dedicated to freakbeat?

Next up we have the bootleg "Purple Pill Eaters" comp, named after the speed tabs that mods used to gobble up like candy. The subtitle of this collection is "Sixteen British Freakbeating Fuzz Monsters from the Sixties", and after such an over-the-top buildup one would expect it to deliver the goods. Alas, in this case there's really only one track that fully matches the above description, HIM & THE OTHERS' "I Mean It". But several of the other tracks are also very fetching, including haunting numbers like "Can't See for Looking" by the BOB-CATS, "Watcha Gonna Do Baby" by the aforementioned JASON EDDIE & THE CENTREMEN, "Heart of Stone" (not the song made famous by the STONES) by the HI-NUMBERS, and "Time Time Time" by the KNACK, not to mention fuzzed-out but not freaky rockers like "Call Me" by the REBELS, "Sweet Sweet Morning" by ROGER YOUNG,

JEFFBALE

and "No Money, No Honey" by IAN & THE ZODIACS. In short, although I like this comp, it's certainly not a "Freakbeating Fuzz Monster" collection.

From the very same people (or so it would appear) is the "Echoes from the Wilderness" compilation, which is subtitled "Sixteen U.K. R&B Freakbeat Trippers". The description itself mixes different subcategories of music, but if the intent was to suggest that this CD is filled with freakbeat, it's simply not true. In fact, there's only one crunchy fuzz guitar track, "Baby I Got a Fix" by...someone completely unknown (since the inconsiderate compilers only listed thirteen of the sixteen tracks). Most of the other cuts are psych pop or, even worse, horn-dominated white soul and R&B songs of the type that I really hate, although to be fair the WORRYING KYNDE's "Got the Blame", TEN FEET's "Shoot on Sight", and the UNIVERSALS' "Hey You" are all pretty catchy songs. Still, if there was an award for false advertising, this collection would probably win the prize.

After all these misleadingly titled comps, one is perhaps tempted to

throw up one's hands and never buy anything entitled "freakbeat" again. But fear not, because the aforementioned "Maximum Freakbeat" comp blows away most of what nowadays falsely passes itself off as freakbeat, not to mention punk rock, these days. Not all of it consists of freakbeat in the strictest sense of that term, but virtually every song is a superior example of powerful, driving, guitar-heavy beat music with pronounced freakbeat or modbeat qualities, and there's no denying that the tracks by WIMPLE WINCH, the RED SQUARES, the MISSING LINKS, THOR'S HAMMER, the GAME, the LEE KINGS, the MAS-COTS, ALLEN POUND'S GET RICH, and TRUTH's cover of "Hey Gyp" combine to make this an "essential 60's compilation", just as the CD blurb claims. If this one comp isn't quite enough for

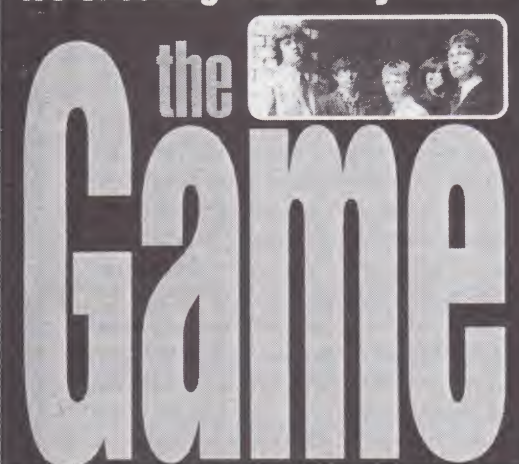


you - and why the hell should it be? - there's no reason not to rush out and pick up some spectacular freakbeat and modbeat records by individual bands.

One of the very best selections of freakbeat music can be found on the first six

songs from the MISUNDERSTOOD's "Before the Dream Faded" LP/CD. Although the MISUNDERSTOOD were in fact a Southern California band who were blessed from the outset with an amazingly innovative guitarist, after being discovered by John Peel in 1966 they decided to seek their fame and fortune in England, where they were saturated with drugs and immersed in current British musical trends, most notably freakbeat. They then went into the studio and recorded some of the finest freakbeat

'It's Shocking What They Call Us'



sides ever produced, all of which can be heard on the above-mentioned CD. No one who loves real rock 'n' roll will be able to crank up cuts like "Children of the Sun", "I Unseen", and "Find A Hidden Door" without having their ears bleed and their mind blown. Alas, once the MISUNDERSTOOD returned to the States - presumably sans drugs - they quickly degenerated into a horrible blues-based boogie rock band, so you should avoid their later records at all costs.

Those of you that are early WHO and modbeat fans have two relatively new options. One is a remastered CD version of the WHO's first album, "My Generation", which also contains twelve mainly unreleased bonus tracks. A dumb legal dispute with the album's original producer has prevented MCA from releasing an official remastered version comparable to their reissues of "A Quick One" and "Sell Out", so some enterprising person has taken it upon himself to fill the void "unofficially", and the results more than justify the effort (though the bass tracks should have been remixed louder). Equally important for modbeat/freakbeat fans will be the EYES' "Arrival of..." CD, which includes all their singles, plus alternate versions and material from a ROLLING STONES covers LP they released under the name the PUPILS. The singles are all fabulous, especially tracks like "When the Night Falls", "The Immediate Pleasure", the simultaneously freaky and punky "You're Too Much", and my personal fave, "I'm Rowed Out", a total modbeat classic.

NEWS

I am extremely sad to have to report that Claude Bessy (aka "Kickboy Face") recently died of cancer in Barcelona. Although I knew that his condition was serious, even I was not aware of just how far his health had deteriorated in recent months. He is survived by his longtime girlfriend Philly, who is no doubt emotionally devastated in ways that the rest of us can't even imagine, as well as by a veritable legion of friends and fans within the punk community, who will never again be subjected to his caustic wit and insightful comments. Once again I have been reminded in the worst possible way - as I was after Tim Yohannan's death - of the blatant unfairness of life, the harsh hand of Fate, and the perverse randomness of death. How can it be that those idiosyncratic, truly talented people who've managed to touch so many lives beyond the narrow confines of their own are forced to endure terrible suffering and tragic deaths, even as millions of other pathetic excuses for human beings not only manage to survive but also to prosper? Don't ask

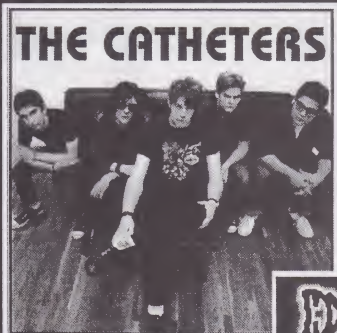
me. All I can say for certain is that I myself found Claude's numerous diatribes in *Slash* magazine to be positively inspirational, not to mention brilliant, provocative, hilarious, abrasive, and at times downright infuriating (which I'm sure would have especially pleased him, had he known), and that I regard it as a great honor that the very last piece he ever published appeared in the second issue of *Hit List*. I regret that I wasn't able to provide him with a forum for his unfettered musings for years to come.

In *Hit List* #6, we plan to set aside space so that people who knew or were inspired by Claude will have the opportunity to reminisce and reflect on his unique personal qualities, his seminal influence on punk journalism, and his tragically premature death. Of course, being cynical punk rockers we're not at all interested in generating some sort of sychophantic hagiography - if we did, I'm sure that Claude himself would rise from

the dead, if only to smite those who dared to besmirch Kickboy's aggressively belligerent public persona - but anyone who is interested in providing some illuminating anecdotes, recollections, or insights regarding Claude is invited to contact us and/or to submit relevant material via e-mail. The deadline for receiving such material will be 15 December 1999.

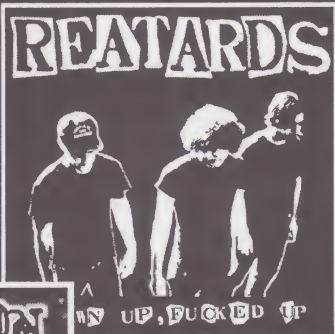
Next issue I'll provide an update on our newest contributors. ☉

I regard it as a great honor that the very last piece [Claude Bessy] ever published appeared in the second issue of Hit List.



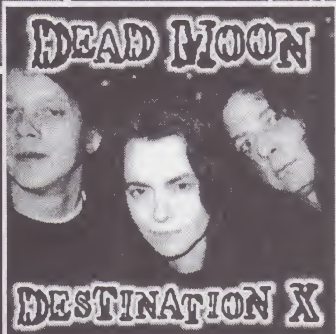
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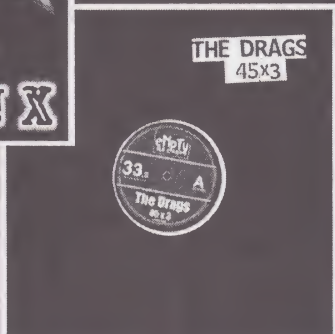
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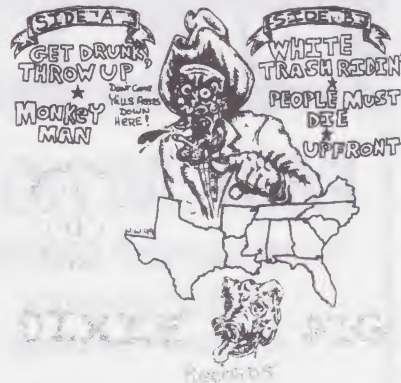
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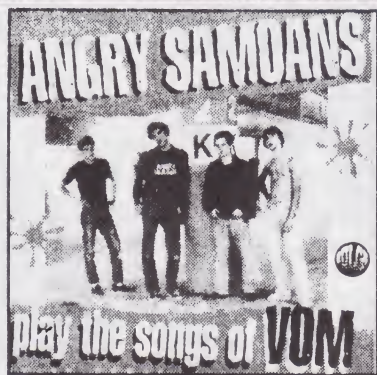
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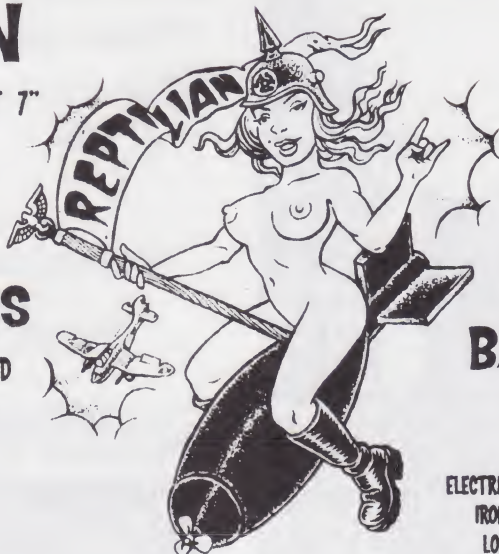
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1. Position of a punk, pushing 40, traveling at 535 mph, 32,000 feet above the Great Western Frontier.

Woe is me! I am outcast!

There I am, settled into my comfy, hermetic airline cabin, minutes into my now-standard ritual of high-altitude scotch and glossy Hit List perusal (in this case, number three), and I discover that Jeff Bale is reading me out of punk rock! Turning me out! Showing me the door! Raus!

He did it in his column this way: "...Vic, and many other smart, ethical people may still be punks, attitude-wise ...but they are most certainly not punk rockers anymore." The argument being that there are five categories of faux punks (artistes, lost souls, troublemakers, politicians, rebels) and one category of true punks (rock 'n' roll maniacs) and Jeff is a rock 'n' roll maniac and I'm-it's not clearly specified (lost soul? politico?)-NOT, because I think most punk rock sucks and would just as soon see people move on to some other category of relentless, abusive, and uncompromising music (and ditch the spiky hair, okay?).

Dr. Bale continues his argument by conceding that punk rock bands today can't really be "original," and that much of what passes for punk is "garbage." Nevertheless, 70s-style punk is "the be-all and end-all" of rock 'n' roll, its "cul-de-sac," since "one cannot imagine a new form of rock music that could be more primitive, raw, and aggressive than punk rock."

And, having reached the end of rock 'n' roll history, if you don't like punk today, "you, yourself have changed for the worst." Ouch! Outcast! I'm telling Mom!

2. Ghosts on the Great Western Frontier.

I'm reading this after a weekend spent in Denver, the quintessential post-modern Western city. Gone are the cowboys, cattle-drives, and the mining companies, and in their place are ski-bunnies, biotech firms, and e-commerce developers. I've seen them intimately, located as I was at the Denver Technology Center, an arid, one-size-fits-all sprawl of glass boxes and impersonal hotels carved out of the prairie about 40 miles southeast of Denver. The DTC is Denver's option for the new millennium: a convention-friendly suburb fully stocked with T-1 lines and Mexican busboys. It looks exactly like every other convention-friendly suburb invested in the latest technological fad, be they in Seattle, San Francisco, or Arlington, Virginia: plenty of SUV-sized parking; Internet access; servants of color.

At the DTC, there are large spaces between buildings because space doesn't matter. Space is a category—like place—rendered obsolete by technology. I don't need to go into Denver when I can access everything that I need from Denver from my hotel room. Or, to be more precise: If I go into Denver, it's to get "the nightlife," and the nightlife there is exactly like the nightlife on Fisherman's Wharf or in the Beverley Center or on Newberry Street or in Times Square: neon; private security guards; a Gap store; a Planet Hollywood; a cineplex. It seems that since place no longer matters, all places look exactly the same. The places where people do work all look like post-industrial parks outside of Dulles Airport; the places where people play are all former neighborhoods converted to theme malls. Welcome to the future: it's boring.

It's also static, and in this I think sameness of place signifies a

generalized post-industrial drive for sameness, for things in their proper place, for the expected and known. This drive is a logical extension of the historical function of sameness, which originally made machines possible: unlike the preceding age of hand-crafted objects, the industrial revolution required its objects and things to be built of predictable, precisely-fitted parts. Sameness was the predicate to a well-running automobile and tractor, just as skyscrapers and the atomic bombs that destroy them are impossible without machine tolerances and mathematical exactitude. Extend this process from physical objects to ideas and concepts and you have the future: intellectual processes model computer



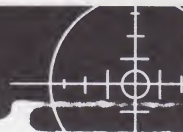
programs and vice-versa; cities and the spaces they occupy become regularized and interchangeable; societies and their political and economic structures become normalized and fixed.

This latter point is rarely acknowledged, but is the central point of the process: sameness, regularity, a fixed and static social order benefits those at the top and assures their prominence. In the future, in other words, there will not be nouveau riche, just rich. And they will be the same people who are rich now. Conversely, not only will the poor always be with us, but they will always be the same people who are with us now.

Of course, my proposition cuts against all the hoary optimism of the moment, of the mega-fortunes being made in the cyber-world, of 23-year-old programming millionaires and 45% returns on high-tech mutual funds. Officially, in the world of the future, everyone will get rich. And officially, historically, especially in the great American West, everyone was supposed to get rich. The pioneer myth, then and now, is of fortunes waiting for the taking, for the pluck and guts of the imaginative, hard-working adventurer. But we know that historically this wasn't the case; that most pioneers and prospectors failed; and that the great American West is full of the ghosts of the ambitious, embittered by their failures on the dry plains. So too, the likely outcome of the new land of opportunity: Expect the post-industrial frontier to be the land of dashed expectations every bit as much as the great Western frontier was.

3. Daniel Bell's Post-Industrial Blues

The most important theorist of the "post-industrial" moment is Harvard sociologist Daniel Bell, an octogenarian who published his major work on the subject, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, in 1973. Bell proposed that society was moving from organization on the basis of industrial labor to organization on the basis of intellectual labor, from the creation of commodities to



the creation of services. He predicted that the new economy would be organized around computers and the distribution of knowledge, with consequences for particular ways of doing work: copyright becomes moot, decision-making becomes consensual, a meritocracy of technocrats replaces an oligarchy of wealth.

These predictions became optimistic gospel for subsequent theorists and popularizers of the new society, but Bell wasn't sanguine about these developments. While he applauded the eventual replacement of wealthy elites by a meritocracy of intelligence and talent, he also predicted that the rise of the meritocracy would provoke a backlash among the less successful, who "bore the stigma of rejection." In culture, he worried that post-industrialism acted as a solvent corroding individual mores and social norms: a society based on intelligence, it seemed, would no longer be disciplined.

This last point is central to his formulation of post-industrialism. Running through his works is a lament for the passing of the cultural authority, for the eclipse of the intellectual epigone—someone like Harvard sociologist Daniel Bell, former labor organizer and socialist, who suddenly, in the 1970s, found himself completely out of step with the social and cultural demands of feminism, black activism, and the counter-culture. Accordingly, the new cultural radicalism of the 1970s posed the greatest threat to post-industrial society:

"...the antinomian attitude (of the counterculture) plunges one into a radical autism which, in the end, disrupts the cords of community and the sharing with others. The lack of a rooted moral belief system is the cultural contradiction of society, and the deepest challenge to its survival."

Bell's animosity to the cultural revolution of his day was deep-seated and long-standing and traceable to the study that made his reputation, a collection of essays published in 1960 as *The End of Ideology*. In that book Bell argued that the advances in living standards and the management of economic cycles had rendered demands for social justice moot. Socialism, the former socialist argued, was really a method for industrializing agrarian societies, and hence its appeal to the Russians and the Chinese. But socialism, as a theory of history, as an idea capable of creating movements and generating change, was like other political ideologies—a victim of the horrific events of the twentieth century, and therefore "exhausted." In its place was an ethos of "intellectual maturity," that guided social change slowly and conservatively, intent on reminding would-be revolutionaries that they do not have "a blank check for everything they choose to do in the name of their emancipation."

Bell wrote *The End of Ideology* at the beginning of one of the most ideologically charged decades of this century. And he was well aware that there were undercurrents of ideological thought—the civil rights movement, the Cuban revolution—that might give expression to broad political movements. His point, however, was to declare ideologies dead and thereby render any ideologically informed social movement illegitimate. In a sense Bell was attempting to acknowledge the inevitability of social change in his time by insisting that for that change to be meaningful it had

to be mediated by people like himself, who had the "intellectual maturity" to separate a legitimate demand for social change from an illegitimate one. But after a decade in which social activists completely ignored Bell, and demanded everything at a thoroughly radical pace, he published *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, and characterized the social and cultural movements of the '60s as filled with resentment, adversarial, and a threat to the new, emerging social order.

In fact, Bell's post-industrial social order looked a lot like the old social order. Even as the economic practices of industrial and post-industrial society differed, they shared a common social structure: one with some people on the top (now, far more legitimately on top than before, because post-industrial elites were born smart and born to manage) and other people on the bottom (the radicals, still filled with illegitimate resentment). No wonder that Bell became an icon of neo-conservatism, whose basic arguments were repeated in many other tracts, most notably Francis Fukuyama's 1991 polemic *The End of History*, where Fukuyama, writing at the end of the Cold War, basically reiterates Bell's argument written in the middle of the Cold War. In both cases the declaration of endings masks an essentially conservative intent, one typical of people who suddenly find themselves out of step with the times: since you can't really end ideologies, or history, or change, you can at least declare these things illegitimate, and insist that the only change that is meaningful is the kind that leaves things exactly the way they are.

4. New Frontiers of Noise

I'd add two more categories to Jeff's typology of punk rock: players and listeners. These are not oppositional types, or, at least, when it came to punk they were not supposed to be oppositional types. Punk rock players were punk rock listeners, and, contrary to the rock 'n' roll of the late '70s and early '80s, punk rock didn't have a division between the performers and the audience: literally, the crowd was right up there with the players on the stage. But there is a difference between someone who plays punk rock and someone who listens to punk rock. The difference is this: someone who listens to punk rock can settle for the same three chords and the same old sound over and over again; someone who plays punk rock can't. You get tired of the same three chords; you want to try something new; you want a challenge. Everyone I know who has played music for a long time ends up wanting to stretch their chops, to change their sound, to progress. Otherwise you end up in a rut; otherwise you end up as a commodity.

The more successful you are as a player or band, the more you end up with this choice: repeat, ad nauseum, the sound that your audience likes, the sound that makes you famous—more precisely, the sound that makes you money; or change that sound, stretch out as a musician, challenge your audience. It is literally a choice between commodity or progress, especially if you manage to make money with it, and begin to employ other people as managers, roadies, etc. No one wants to end a good thing, especially if you're making money. So the push to keep your sound exactly the same becomes immense. But here's the problem: people get tired of the same old sound too. The band that doesn't grow, dies. And not just as a commodity, but as musical creators.

As a listener, I used to hate it when a band or musician with

a great sound came out with a new album where they added piano or strings or some other crap that polluted their sound, but as a player I understand it completely. One of the great joys of music is the joy of discovery: you twist your fingers around a new chord and-voila!-you discover a new sound. Someone in the band starts noodling around with a riff and-eureka!-you discover a new song. It's true that a lot of the time you're reinventing the wheel, that the things you discover as a musician have probably been done before, by someone else. There are only six strings on that guitar. But the personal experience is always new and overwhelming, and quite frankly the fact that Hendrix discovered octave chords on guitar first did not detract one whit from my happiness in stumbling across them 15 years after he died. So it's inconceivable to me to ask a player to find a sound and stick to it. It may well be that all players have one or two things they do well and when they stray from that, they're not that good. I can count on one hand the number of bands that have successfully developed and opened up their sound while keeping true to its original spirit. And you can count even fewer the number who have done that and still kept their audience, and still been successful: Lou Reed, Bob Mould, maybe, and Fugazi. But if you stop thinking about the process as limited to one band, than the push to develop a new sound is continual and very successful: any number of bands can be said to have picked up where the Clash left off, or taken up the Bad Brains banner, or mutated the Residents into something great. That's progress.

That's also history, and evolution. There's always a great new band picking up where someone left off. My current favorite is Juno, a Seattle band whose new album starts where Mission of Burma ended: noisy, with an arty edge (sometimes a little too pretentious) that never gets in the way of their ass-whupping rock. Juno pushes

the envelope and stakes a claim to a new frontier of noise. They've got three-guitar counter-point, some long, depressing dirges, and full-scale noise thrash. They're terrific, and unafraid to challenge convention. If there were a thousand bands out there like Juno, I wouldn't be so down on the current state of punk rock. But there aren't enough bands like them, and that is precisely why punk rock today sucks. And given that state, we might as well get rid of it.

5. Punctuating Jeff's Equilibrium

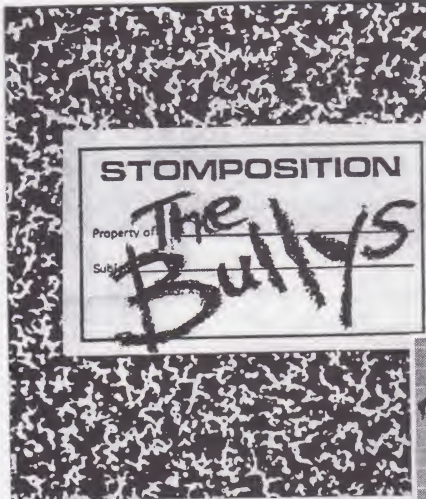
Punctuated equilibrium is an idea in evolutionary theory that punk rockers need to adapt to music. The theory holds that leaps in the evolutionary development of species do not take place at a consistent pace. Rather, species development stratifies, slows until such time as a radical, sudden change punctuates the equalized pace of development. Rock 'n' roll history evolves the same way. Genres grow old, decrepit, stale. And suddenly someone out there condemns the whole rotting business and goes back to basics and finds some new way to get harder, faster, and louder. That's why rock 'n' roll will never die: not because you go to school and learn the rules and stick to them. But because you start where the guys that broke the rules before you left off, and then you break every single fucking rule there is.

To me, that means punk as an attitude is a hell of a lot more important than punk as a musical style, and it also means this: you can go beyond '77 punk style-you HAVE to go beyond '77 punk style to be punk. It also means this: declaring limits to sound is the same thing as insisting on rules to sound, and that declaring that punk is the end of rock 'n' roll history is a lot like declaring that free market democracy is the end of history itself, that post-industrial society is the best of all possible worlds, and that any social change has to be slowly and carefully evaluated by our intellectual leaders before it can be acted upon legitimately. What's really going on is an accommodation to the way things are, and a denial that they can ever be any other way. It's the philosophy of stasis, of the status quo, of social and political arrangements the way they are, and of culture and music in its proper place. It's like saying that you can accept punk as an artifact, as the sound of an irrelevant subculture, but you cannot accept punk as an idea which demands EVERYTHING: ecstasy, revolution, redemption. And even worse, you cannot accept punk as a phenomenon which sounds like these ideas.

For me, punk rock demands and delivers all those things, and that's what makes it great. And even if I don't think you get that anymore from the sound of '70s style punk (or worse yet, from the lyrics of 90s bands playing that sound), I do agree with Jeff that we all need to go back to '70s punk to get its true spirit. I'd start with what Johnny Rotten scrawled on his Pink Floyd T-Shirt in 1977:

Destroy. ⊕

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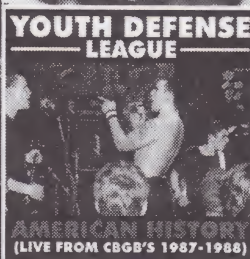
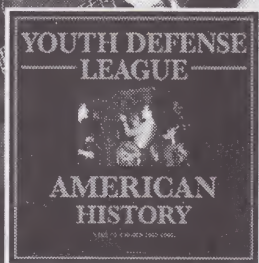
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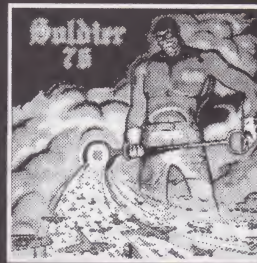
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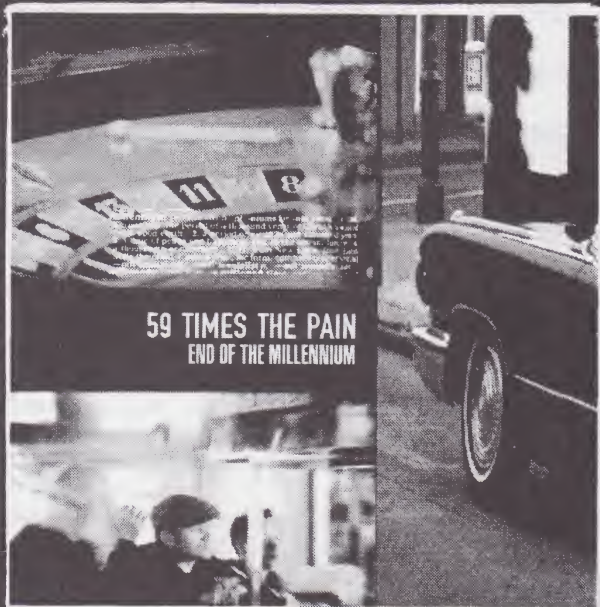
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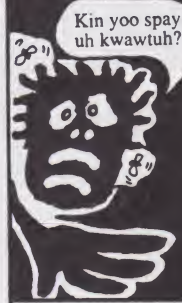


BOMBSHELL ROCKS

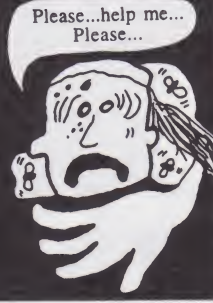
Street Art Gallery

...CD/LP

BUMS



Kin yoo spay
uh kwawtuh?



Please...help me...
Please...

While there are tons of reasons to hate the big city, possibly the most tedious and frustrating issue is dealing with all the stinking rotten bums that litter the sidewalks. Their lines vary only slightly from day to day and from bum to bum.

Here's a dollar.
Now *promise me*
you're not going to
go buy liquor with it!



Urghhhh...I...uh...
[hic!] promise...

So how do people deal with the problem? There are those who succumb to the pleas of the beggars, feeling sorry for them and thinking that they are helping those who are in need.

HOMELESS SHELTER



These poor people
NEED my help!
I am making a
difference in
other people's lives!

Others donate their time and money to build and operate shelters for the bums, thinking that if they are given the opportunity they will pull their lives together and become decent citizens...ha!

The "HOMELESS"
have rights, too!
Those poor, unfortunate
people need someone to
represent them, and it might
as well be ME!



Still others donate their time and money to offer LEGAL ASSISTANCE to the filthy bums so that they won't be harassed by the police and treated like what they are...WORTHLESS SCUM.

Why are there
SO MANY homeless
people? My God...
however are we
going to SOLVE
this PROBLEM???



Then...after they've done everything in the world to try and help these subhuman scum, these same idiots ask *why* there are so many bums (!). As usual, people just don't think. Consider the way that you deal with a rat problem. If the garbage that you leave behind the house is attracting rats, you *don't* put out more garbage!

Sir! Sir?
Can you spare
a dollar?

Not for you.



But sir...I need
MONEY to buy toys
for my CHILDREN...
and it is Christmas!

You know what?
I don't give a
shit about your
goddamn children.
They can die
for all I care.

Once while heading into a toy store, an immigrant beggar woman approached me and asked for money. Isn't honesty the best policy? At least that's what I was taught...

What the...?



Ohhhhhh...ahhhhh...
Ugghhhhhhhhh...uhhhhh...
Aaaaaaaahhhhhh...

I will admit that ON RARE OCCASION bums can be entertaining...like the time I was taking a mid-day walk downtown and spotted a bum laying on the sidewalk...at a major intersection...with his pants and underwear pulled down to his ankles...

Urrrrrghhhhhhh...
Ohhhhhh...ahhhhh...
Ugghhhhhhhhh...uhhhhh...
Aaaaaaaahhhhhh...



He was moaning and grunting and crapping all over himself in this big filthy puddle he had made with his big fat ass facing the street...right in broad daylight in front of everyone. The smell was unbelievable.

Goddamn...I can't believe
anyone wouldn't want
to watch this asshole
crapping his insides out!
What a scream!



What was even more unbelievable was that the people passing by acted as if he WASN'T EVEN THERE! I suppose dealing with the harsh reality of their downtown environment was just too much for the urban scuzzballs to handle...

Please ma'am...
can you spare
a quarter?



Kiss my ass,
you worthless
shit.

Instead of helping them, we should all be doing our part to make the bums feel unwelcome. Then, and ONLY then, they might just stop harassing us and go away.

KILL THEM.



Most people think that there is no way to solve the "homeless problem"...but there actually IS an easy and simple solution staring us right in the face...

©1998 EVLER SPEAR/ROW BOWMAN. THIS BLENDER WRAPPER WAS STAINED WITH BEEF LARD AT THE FIREHOUSE IN SAN FRANCISCO BY HAWK. MILLER WITH POLYURETHANE. 657-7000. 03/03-07-98

**THREE TWO-BARRELS AND
A WHOLE LOTTA WATTAGE:**
440 Six-Pack in action.

d i b l y

strange

WRESTLING

interview by Brett Mathews
photos by Roger Franklin

HITTIN' LOWLY IN THE COJONÉS: *The Cruiser illustrates the wrong way to get a date with a cop, while Dead Man Walking's manager suffers the slings and arrows of his emasculated fortune.*



Brett: How did it all begin? What were the first steps in creating the Incredibly Strange Wrestling concept?

Audra: Me, Bret, Augie, and Johnny Legend were all stupid toy collectors and comic book people, and the way we learned about Lucha was through "Love And Rockets" comic books.

Brett: Explain Lucha.

Audra: Lucha Libre is Mexican freestyle wrestling. It is a form of wrestling that originated in Mexico City about sixty

years ago, and in Mexico and Central America it's almost as big as soccer, or maybe as big as basketball is here. The Lucha wrestlers are real life superheroes. This form of wrestling has the same general foundations as American wrestling, in terms of the actual holds, but it's a lot faster paced, it's a lot more high-flying, it's a lot more vicious, and it's a lot more entertaining. The characters are much cooler, their costumes are more elaborate, and they're masked and

caped.

Brett: They're all masked?

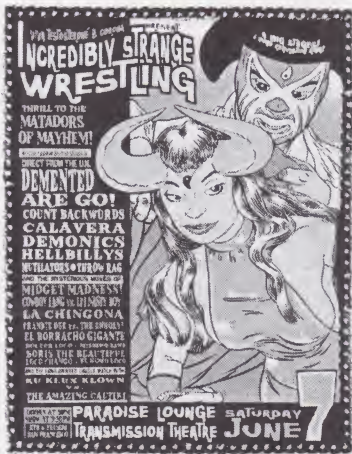
Audra: No, not all of them, but a lot of them. One of the rules of Lucha is that if you are unmasked in public, you aren't ever allowed to wrestle masked again. It's a huge dishonor to be unmasked in the ring.

Brett: Like Ray Mysterio, Jr.

Audra: Exactly! Why he sold out, I'll never know. It bums me out, since he used to be my favorite wrestler. He



—Audra explains Lucha for Dummies.



asked me out on a date once. If he were masked, I would have gone out with him, but he took off his mask, and then I saw him in a Jack-In-The-Box in San Jose. That pretty much did it. He was a little too short for me, anyway. He sold out, he totally sold out. And it's not entirely his fault, you know? He's this poor little Mexican from a Third World country, not a rich country. He's probably never seen any real money in his entire life, and he sold out when they waved all that money in his face. It's partly his fault, but it's more the fault of the big money guys.

Brett: He's wrestling with the NO LIMITZ soldiers.

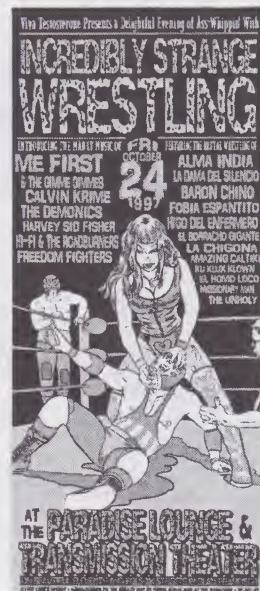
Audra: They've made them into these big wrestling dolls—it's all in one package—and Ray is this little doll, he's being held up in the air and his mask comes off, then it goes back on. It's the worst! I saw it at Toys-R-Us a few weeks ago, and I was so upset I had to leave the store without buying anything. That's really saying something, since I've never left a Toys-R-Us without buying anything. But anyway...Incredibly Strange Wrestling! It started out with comic books and all that. I had this boyfriend, and we'd go down to Tijuana, where I saw all sorts of masks and costumes. I'd seen this type of wrestling



actually seen a live show. I was totally in awe of the whole thing. Me and my friends thought it was the coolest thing in the world, and we all began collecting masks and magazines, whatever we could get our hands on. Then one time we all got together, and we were talking about things, and we decided that we wanted to do something really cool. At that time I was the booking agent for the Paradise Lounge and Transmission Theater, so we had a place to hold events. We had all these bands at our disposal, because I was booking them and I could bring whoever or whatever I wanted into the club. We just thought it would be a crazy, kooky idea. We figured we'd never be able to see or be involved in the real thing, so there was no reason not to do it ourselves for fun. We never thought there would be a second show—it was our hare-brained idea, and we weren't really sure whether anyone else would like it. We didn't have a ring, just oak wood staging with two layers of packing blankets and a tarp thrown over it, and we hardly had any professional wrestlers. We had a couple of semi-pro people and the rest were just our friends. We all put on our



before on some videos and on Mexican television, but I'd never



masks and stupid costumes. I mean, I wore a mask and a tutu, for Christ

Brett: And your wrestling name was...?
Audra: (Laughs) We won't be discussing that! We just did the show, and we didn't even know how to wrestle, we just had these few little story lines that we were coming up with,"OK, we can have a -- vs. -- match!" We came up with story lines. We practiced the day of the show, and we pretty much just beat the crap out of each other in this fake ring that didn't even have ropes or anything; it was just a square, a wooden square. And we beat each other until one person couldn't move anymore, and the next day we all woke up with hematomas all over our bodies. We were exhausted, it was crazy. At the first show, we had three bands in the Paradise Lounge, just like at a regular show, and then for an extra two bucks you could stay after hours and come into the Transmission Theatre, where we were putting on the wrestling show. There were about fifty people, and everyone loved it. They thought it was hysterical.

Brett: What year was this?

Audra: That was on May 13th, 1995.

After that event, everyone said, "Oh, you've got to do a second show!" OK, so we did a second show, and we found a ring through this guy in the East Bay, and that was crazy. Johnny claims that he found the ring, but it was all of us, putting the word out, asking everyone, and calling all these different people. I don't know who actually found the ring, all I know is that we were responsible for getting the ring in there. So we did the second show, we had about 150 attend, and everybody went crazy for it.

did was on the Fourth of July at The Gorge Amphitheater in Washington. The first of the wrestling sets took place at high noon; it was 105 degrees and we had to deal with the sun beating down on the tops of our heads, we were totally dehydrated and practically dying from the heat, and we couldn't even get any water. Johnny hadn't negotiated the deal so that the sponsors would be forced to provide us with soda, booze, food, or even a tub of water. They were so shitty to us, it was unbelievable.

ent wrestlers in different places, wherever our friends would wrestle with us, and a few regulars. It was just kind of crazy, and as a matter of fact my sister ended up getting her rib broken because of Johnny Legend and his bullshit. There was a big wrestler there who had never wrestled with us before, and she had a match with one of the guys that she had wrestled a bunch of times, they were doing their match. Then this 400-pound wrestler who was a little overzealous just decided that he was

THE PROCESS AND THE PROGENY: *The Inbred Abomination and El Gourmexico coach The Abomination's manager/wife/sister/cousin Ellie through childbirth. Inset: Ellie and the Abomination's son/little brother/cousin.*



I was working with Toni Isabella at the Paradise at that time, she's been around everywhere, and one of her good friends is Don Muller, who was president of the William Morris Agency, which booked Lollapalooza. I thought it would be a really cool idea to do an ISW event at Lollapalooza. It was in June that we first thought about it, and the next thing you know, we had the Lollapalooza people calling us to do a show! But we were out of town, and Johnny intercepted the call. We said OK, Johnny's the only one around, talk to him, so he made the deal with Lollapalooza, and we didn't know what it was, what kind of money was involved, or any of the other details, and as a result we ended up not getting paid and losing a bunch of money. But it was cool and fun and all that. I don't know if Johnny made any money or not, but that's history. It was the beginning of the end with Johnny. The first show we

Finally, after I went running around pissed off and making a scene, they brought us a cooler full of water. Of course, that was gone in five minutes, and then we couldn't even find a hose to refill it. And things pretty much went downhill from there.

Brett: Still, Lollapalooza must have resulted in pretty good exposure.

Audra: It was good exposure, but it was really weird. At the time the show wasn't even organized at all. We had differ-



going to jump into the ring and join the match. She got pinned by the wrestler that she was actually wrestling, and this other guy rushed in and jumped on top of them, injuring both of them and snapping her rib. As a result, she had to

continue wrestling during the rest of the tour with a broken rib. Shit like that made the whole thing a big mess, and after Lollapalooza all this shit with Johnny got worse and worse. Eventually we parted company with Johnny and his cohorts, and the show

TORTILLA PARTY TONIGHT! Electric Frankenstein's Steve Miller rocks through the corn in his eyes.



went on and got bigger and bigger. Bret and I did it the way we wanted to, and from there the show started growing and growing and growing.

Brett: How did you meet up with Johnny Legend?

Audra: I just want to begin by saying that I've been cool about this for years, I have never, ever swept Johnny Legend under the rug. I've never lied and acted like this was all my idea, I've always given credit where credit is due. He's been slagging me all along, but recently he's done it in an especially ugly way. So now I can just say "fuck Johnny Legend"! He can kiss my big fat ass. He was one of my partners when we first started out—it was me and Johnny and Bret and Augie. He worked with us for a while. His main involvement, other than storylines, was bringing in wrestlers. Bret and I booked the bands. We always did the physical work. Johnny Legend burned his bridges with us, he lied to us, and there's been missing money where Johnny Legend's concerned. He was never honest with us. I have a theory that if you don't trust anyone else, you're probably not very trustworthy yourself, and he doesn't trust anybody. We didn't kick him out. He walked away. All we did was confront him about money that we found out was missing. Members of his band came to us and told us that they'd never been paid, even though we'd given him money to pay them. Also, one of the wrestlers told us that he made 30 bucks, whereas others said that all they got was gas money. In the course of several shows, thousands of dollars went unaccounted for. I can't tolerate someone who lies to me, and I can't tolerate a thief, and Johnny Legend was both.

Brett: So you've been putting on ISW shows two or three times a year for the past four years?

Audra: No, first we did them at the Transmission, and then the crowds got too big for that, so we took over both clubs: one ticket got you into both the Transmission and the Paradise. We were doing them religiously every six to eight weeks, and then once a month during the summers. In 1997 we went on tour and did 23 dates across the country. Now that it's gotten so much bigger, we're doing the shows at the Fillmore. We broke free from the Paradise and Transmission in 1998. I was then putting on the shows just with whatever money I had as an outside promoter, and bringing in everything, lights, sound, and so forth. To do all that, it became a really,

**THE GRISLY END OF THE NOTORIOUS
MAKE-A-WISH MATCH:** Flaco Loco and
Evangelico introduce Curtis Radovich to
their good friend, José Cuervo.



really expensive show, so I couldn't afford to do it all the time. Then we hooked up with the Fillmore and now we're working on doing the shows more frequently, and the Fillmore is totally behind us. They want us to do them every couple of months, and we're now working all the bugs out.

Brett: What bands played the first wrestling show?

Audra: Johnny Legend and his Rockabilly Bastards, plus the Slow Gin Joes...that's it! Only two bands!

Brett: Has the diversified sound of the bands just turned everything into a normal rock and roll thing now?

Audra: We started off with those kinds of bands because we were all into rockabilly at the time. Bret and Augie were still very much into rockabilly, and

ple up, and then drop them way down, and then try and get them worked up again, it becomes a lot harder to please them.

Brett: At what point did you start integrating the wrestling with the bands, as opposed to separating the show from the actual wrestling?

Audra: By the second show, we had integrated bands with the wrestling. It was only during that first show that we didn't know what was up, and then the Paradise was questioning us about it. The owner of the Paradise was fucking insane. He was against everything. You could arrange a sold out show there, and he would be against it just because. Everybody else was behind us, and obviously it was my thing and I was working there. It was sort of like, "Well,

Francisco before. And the Ghastly Ones, who may have played here since. We had all these smaller bands, and it was doing really well, and when we started to incorporate more rock and roll stuff, it did even better. By that time it was just me and Bret. Everyone else was already long gone.

Brett: At that point, when nobody had ever heard of bands like the Bomboras, did you learn that people who came to check out the wrestling ended up being stoked on the bands?

Audra: Yeah, exactly. The bands brought some of it in, but the wrestling was definitely bringing in the bulk of the crowd. The Dragons played, and that went really well, but it was still a smaller band thing. When Bret and I started getting a name, we really worked hard to make it

If the band that followed the first set of wrestling wasn't at least as upbeat as the wrestling was, the crowd turns on them! They go crazy, and the next thing you know they can barely play their instruments because they're being booed (before we had tortillas) or pelted with tortillas or whatever else they could get their hands on.

-Audra, on how she selects the order of the evening's rock units

Johnny Legend obviously had a rockabilly band, and those were our friends who were interested in doing the show, so naturally that's the way it originally panned out. But as the shows got bigger, we needed to get different types of music to attract different sorts of people, and through trial and error we eventually figured out what worked and what didn't. For example, surf sometimes worked and sometimes didn't, rockabilly doesn't really work that well any more, and if you're going to put a rockabilly band on there, it's gotta be the first band before the first bout of wrestling. What we found out was that once you got people worked up with the wrestling, you needed to keep the momentum going. If the band that followed the first set of wrestling wasn't at least as upbeat as the wrestling was, the crowd turns on them! They go crazy, and the next thing you know they can barely play their instruments because they're being booed (before we had tortillas) or pelted with tortillas or whatever else they could get their hands on. It's just the natural thing. If you bring peo-

ple up, and then drop them way down, and then try and get them worked up again, it becomes a lot harder to please them. But he didn't want to open the Transmission Theater for some weird wrestling thing that he'd never seen or heard of before. That's why we did the after hours show for two bucks, so that people could either stick around or not. By the second show, he was into it as much as everybody else, and they all thought this was something cool that they should all work on.

Brett: At what point did the bigger bands start seeing this as a real gig and event?

Audra: Years afterwards. We started off with little bands. Like I said, the Legendary Stardust Cowboys and of course Johnny Legend. We also did Pearl Harbor, we did the Mentors, we did Deadbolt. Even Deadbolt was nothing compared to what they've since become! All these bands were bringing in these smaller crowds. We did the Count Backwards and the Bomboras, who nobody had yet heard of—the Bomboras had never played in San

what it is, what it was about to become. We started to try to get bigger bands, and we did a couple of little tour things. We went to the South By Southwest festival and put on a show with bigger bands, and we did the Gavin event in New Orleans and put on our show with Los Straight Jackets. We had done some of these bigger shows, and we thought that we might be able to put them on here in SF too. So we approached some more popular bands, and the shows started getting bigger and bigger, and after awhile people from bigger bands started contacting us about the possibility of playing shows, including Mike Watt, Electric Frankenstein, and the Dwarves. Once I took the shows over, I decided to go after some of the bigger bands, because these were the bands that I liked and I thought it would be cool. I was very confident about doing bigger shows, because word had gotten around that ISW was a cool show and that we took care of people, paid people well, didn't fuck anyone over, and that everyone had a lot of fun. Really big bands like

the Humpers and the Supersuckers were among the ones that I went after, and they wanted to do it.

Brett: When was your first real tour?

gave us tour support, and did a bunch of publicity stuff for us. This was in October of '97.

Brett: Once you began hitting these

room.

Brett: Do you mean that you have to take the actual ring on tour with you?

Audra: Oh yeah! We had a fifteen-pas-



HE ALWAYS DID GO FOR BEARS...El Oso (left) meets his date in the ring, the Cruiser.

Audra: Our first tour was Lollapalooza, and then we went down to Southern California and did a bunch of these Arte Libre shows with Mexican artists who did a lot of Lucha Libre-inspired artwork, and those were cool. Those were fun. The first major tour that was ours alone, and that was not just a weekend or maybe a week, was a three-week tour all the way to Detroit and back. That was our own tour, with Me First And The Gimme Gimmes, Calvin Crime, and the Demonics. Amphetamine Reptile Records were totally behind the project, and they helped us out with everything,

new cities and new audiences, did you find it reminiscent of your first shows here? Obviously, these shows were at bigger venues, since you were touring with Me First And The Gimme Gimmes, but...

Audra: Yes and no (laughs). I mean, we didn't play all big venues. The first show on the tour was this place in Denver called the Snake Pit, which is very appropriately named, I must say—we barely had enough room for one person to stand around the ring. There was some space in the back of the room, but the ring itself was about as wide as the

senger van and a twenty foot box truck.
Brett: How many wrestlers did you take with you?

Audra: We had eleven wrestlers, a couple of ring workers, and the announcers. That tour was really weird. No matter where we played, we had a really good response. Even though there were some were cities (like Chicago) where the audiences didn't really know who the Gimme Gimmes were, the events still ended up being packed just because of the wrestling. We had gotten a lot of press coverage, and people had been writing about us, so there was a bit of a

buzz. Some of the shows were smaller, but none of them were attended by less than 200 people. That was really cool, especially considering that it was our first time out, and every single promoter and booking agent asked us back. Actually, a couple of people we know played at this club in Fort Collins, and told us that they have our poster signed and framed up on the wall. Everyone was really cool, and the shows were really well received.

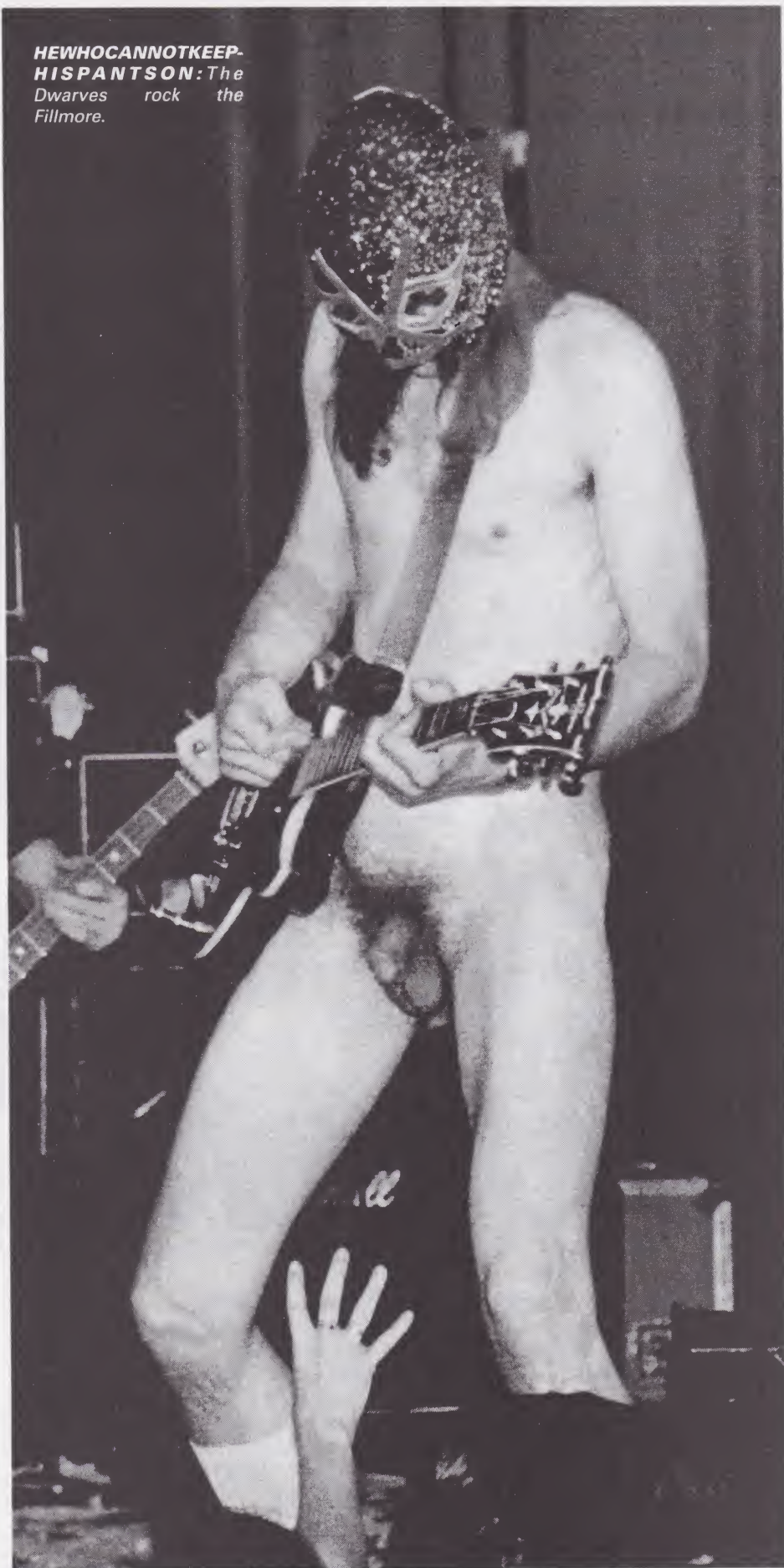
Brett: At what point did you develop a cult following?

Audra: There was always some sort of cult following, just because it was something different and crazy. At first we had our own little group of friends who would come out to see whatever we put on, then it became sort of an underground cult thing. The show we put on with the Count Backwards and the Bomboras was so successful, it was great. Some people came for the wrestling, others came to be part of this cult following, and still others came for the bands, so it was great for everybody. The show has gotten bigger and bigger, but we've still managed to maintain our original following. After we got big publicity, it sort of exploded and became "the cool thing to do" for a lot of people.

Brett: What's up with the tortillas?

Audra: The tortillas...At every show we have a "no bottles, no glass" kind of rule, but people will end up throwing anything that they can find. They get so crazy and so into it that they'd even throw their girlfriends if they could manage it. Or even their boyfriends, since the women get even crazier than the guys! So people started throwing Jack Daniels and Coke at the wrestlers, and if the ice didn't end up hurting you then the alcohol burned your eyes. Then they would find a piece of glass or a bottle somewhere, and they would throw that as well. It was crazy, and we would make announcements throughout the whole show that you can't throw shit, but it didn't seem to matter. One night we had the Bomboras playing, and they had their go-go girls with them. The girls were using those little tortillas for tacos as pasties, and during the final number they ripped them off their boobs and threw them into the crowd. Bret and I were standing there, and we both looked at each other and realized, "Oh my god! Tortillas! That's it! We can give them tortillas, they fit the Mexican theme, and they don't hurt." No matter how hard you get hit

HEWHO CANNOT KEEP HIS PANTS ON: The Dwarves rock the Fillmore.



by a tortilla, it doesn't hurt. You can roll it into a ball and throw it in someone's face and it'll hurt, but that'll get you kicked out of the show. Individual tortillas, they might sting a little, but they're not going to kill you. Not to mention that they aren't going to break anything. A tortilla, even if it hits the sound board, is not going to damage it. And it's an easy clean up.

Brett: So you brought your own tortillas to the match?

were thinking, "Yeah, the cleanup's kind of a pain in the ass, but nobody's throwing bottles." It turns the audience into a part of the show, so they get to relieve a little of their aggression and angst that the wrestling may have helped to stimulate.

Lori: Remember that time at the Transmission, when people started bringing the flour tortillas and the pita bread?

Audra: Yeah, when we first started the

throw motherfucking pita bread! This isn't Middle Eastern wrestling, it's Mexican wrestling!"

Brett: Nowadays when you go to the shows, and before people are allowed inside, there will be a line of people standing around with bags of tortillas in their hands.

Audra: I overheard someone saying, "Here's twenty bucks! Go buy all the tortillas you can!" Jesus Christ! Twenty bucks is what I used to spend for an



GODDAMMIT, CORNELIUS! GET ME A FUCKING SAW! Doctor Gorilla & the Monkey Medics perform emergency surgery on El Diablo Blanco's manager.

Audra: Yeah, and for the tour I went out and bought 22 dozen per show for the road. So you do the math—over 23 shows, how many tortillas did I have in my car? Three weeks later, by the end of the tour, the tortillas had gotten really hard and stale, and they actually started to hurt people. By then they were all stuck together, so there would be a clump of six of them! That was painful, but people loved it. The club owners

tortilla thing, people brought their own tortillas. Augie was up on the stage standing next to Alan Bolte, and somebody whacked me on the head with a piece of pita bread. My initial reaction was, "What is this? Tell them this isn't Middle Eastern wrestling!" So Augie grabs the microphone and goes, "OK, folks, let's have a little lesson on tortillas. Corn ones, they fly. The flour ones, they don't fly so well. And don't

entire show! At 25¢ a dozen, that's a lot of tortillas! Pretty soon, we're going to have to limit it to a few dozen each. It's gotten crazy, especially when we did that Evening Magazine segment, and they really played up the tortillas. Now everyone's bringing tortillas. At the last show, I think I bought 18 or 20 dozen, and you saw how many tortillas there were! Those were all brought in from the street.

Brett: And when the bands get off the stage, they're picking tortillas out of their noses...

Audra: That's the other thing, too. I try to warn bands in advance. The Supersuckers were one of the bands that said, "Hey! That motherfucker threw a tortilla at me!"

Lori: And Gas Huffer: "If another person throws a tortilla at me, I'm not playing one more song!"

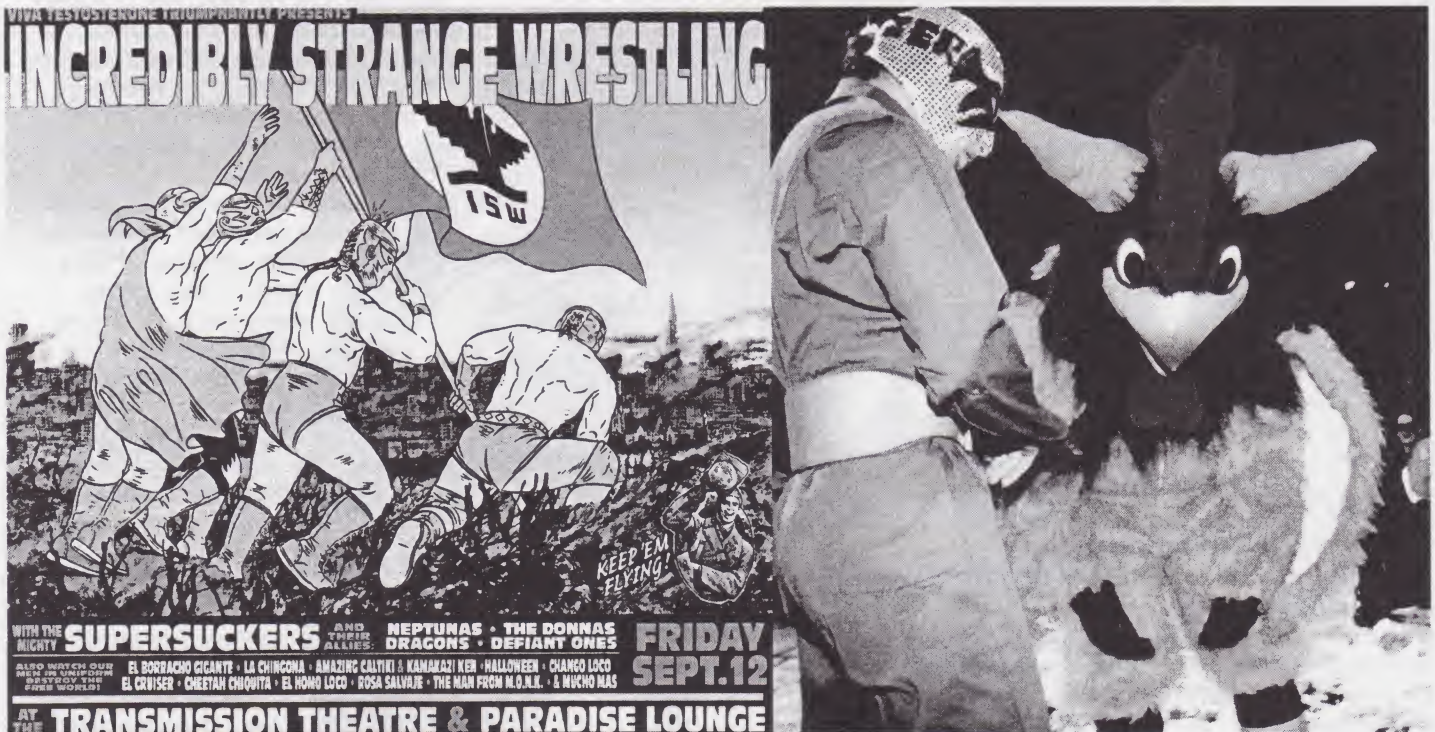
Audra: Yeah, he said, "If one more person throws a tortilla at me, I'm not playing another song!" The next thing you

way he can. He got involved because Blag [Jesus of the Dwarves] was La Chingona's manager for a while. And Spike was Chango Loco's manager. But recently Spike went out on tour and couldn't do it, so we got Jello from backstage, took Chuck Sperry's shirt off of him, because Jello was wearing some ridiculous outfit, put that shirt on Jello, and said, "OK, you're a manager tonight!" And now he's involved in every show, and he loves it.

Brett: I was at the last show at the Fillmore, and I looked over and Jello

in interest in the WCW and WWF in any way coincides with the rise in interest in ISW.

Audra: I think there's a big thing about wrestling now, I think that America has embraced wrestling. We've been pretty mainstream in the underground, but we're not mainstream in the mainstream. The truth is that neither the WCW or the WWF would ever touch Lucha. When we started doing it, I actually heard Vince McMahon and some other guys calling it Third World wrestling. They scoffed at it, they con-



IF SATAN WAS A CHICKEN, FUCKER: El Pollo Diablo (right) and Damage Inc — ready to rumble!

know, every person in the room was pelting him with tortillas. It was beautiful. Band members will throw them right back. When the bands aren't playing, they're throwing tortillas at the wrestlers or the other bands, or whatever. I think people understand now that if you don't give them tortillas, they're going to throw something else—a drink, a bottle, a shoe. And shoes hurt!

Brett: At some point, the bands not only wanted to participate as bands, but also as wrestlers. Jello Biafra was even up there!

Audra: He wasn't wrestling exactly. We can't wrestle with Jello! He's a wrestling manager. Jello thinks it's a really cool show, and he thinks it's a great idea, and he likes the music that I book on it. I don't want to toot my own horn, but he loves pretty much anything that I do; he offers me support by showing up or being involved or helping out in any

was up on stage, talking shit to everybody. And then I looked down at the other side of the ring, and there were the members of Metallica, who were totally stoked to be there and having the greatest time. It's evolved into something really crazy.

Audra: I've always done this for fun. This whole thing started for fun, as a big joke. I still do it for fun—believe me, I don't do it for money! It's just really crazy to see all these people. Yeah, it's really cool to see Metallica and whoever else is there. I think it's cool that they're at my show, but they're human beings like everybody else. It's great to have that support, and it's cool that these people are actually paying attention to our shows and coming out. Les Claypool, for example; he came out to some of the shows and now he's there all the time.

Brett: Do you think that the current rise

demned it, they talked shit about it, and now they're making a lot of money off of it. And I know for a fact that if we hadn't started doing this Lucha thing, they wouldn't be doing it now. I firmly believe that. We went on Lollapalooza and did this in 1995, before any of these people started doing it. I think maybe we've gained a little bit from the WCW and WWF becoming so big, but they've gained a lot more from us. Frankly, American wrestling bores me a lot. I think the old stuff is so cool. I mean, George The Animal Steel and Andre The Giant, and Bruno San Martino, and all those guys from the seventies, that was fucking wrestling. Those guys were vicious, they were crazy, they were funny, and it was really fun stuff. Nowadays it's just a bunch of meat-heads on steroids. A lot of MY local wrestlers are punk rock kids. If we had a big budget, our show would be so much

cooler! That's just a fact. And there's too much talking in conventional wrestling! Talk, talk, talk! Fucking shut up and wrestle! Do something!

Brett: Now they're also incorporating a lot more music.

Audra: They've definitely been working on that too. Whatever! They probably took it from us! Ha, print that! Soon enough, they're going to have fucking bands on there. I love Stone Cold, though, he's smart.

Brett: WCW launched their own KISS wrestler.

Audra: There you go. They stole it from us! I've watched a lot of WCW and WWF over the years, and I've never seen a band on there before!

Lori: Never?

Audra: Never. But I've been doing it since 1995. So even if I don't ever make as much money as Vince McMahon, or never get that big, at least I know they stole that from me.

Brett: Where do you see this going?

Audra: Originally when Bret and I saw that this was going someplace, we thought, "Pay-per-view!" That would be great. I'd like to see it get as big as possible! I'd like to make some money off of it someday. That would be cool. To be able to pay ALL of my wrestlers someday, that would be incredible. If I could pay all my friends...I mean, everyone gets paid, but no one gets what they deserve, because they're my friends and they have to suffer right along with me. I guess if it got too big and we couldn't do the things we're doing now, you never know. I would stop it if people thought they weren't a part of it anymore.

Brett: What if they wanted the wrestling without the bands?

Audra: No, the bands are just as important. If I just did wrestling, it would be like the WWF, and if I just did music, it would just be a stupid club with music.

Brett: Who have been some of your favorite bands?

Audra: Mike Watt. He is hands down the easiest and best person I have ever worked with in my entire life. He's so laid back and cool and part of the show. He said that for the Southern California show he's going to be the Inbred Abomination's manager, which is really cool. I've met a lot of people who were idols in my life, and then they totally disappointed me and crushed all of my childhood dreams, but he was not one of them. The Dwarves are always good

for a wrestling show. They're crazy like wrestling, and they make people crazy. Who else? I know there are a bunch of people. The Toilet Boys show was one of my favorite shows! They didn't know about the tortillas. I mean, they knew about them, but they didn't really KNOW about them. With all their pyrotechnics and the tortillas, everything smelled like cooked corn. I loved having Electric Frankenstein on that show. I want Cheap Trick to play wrestling someday.

Brett: How does the merchandise affect the audience?

Do you think it

and it was something that Bret and I were adamant about. Especially Bret. He was the one that went and sought out Chuck Sperry. Any poster that documents the show is cool! It's something that you can look at 50 years from now, and it will bring it all back.

Brett: I hear you have a wrestling compilation CD coming out?

Audra: Yes, as a matter of fact we do. There is a new label called 75 ARK that will be putting it out. The title of the CD is "Solo Lucha Salva". The CD features 22 of the bands that have played at Incredibly Strange Wrestling, including Electric Frankenstein, the Dwarves, Me First and the Gimme Gimmes, 440 Six-Pack, the Toilet Boys, the Weaklings, the Tedio Boys from Portugal, the Phantom Rockers, Deadbolt, and many more.

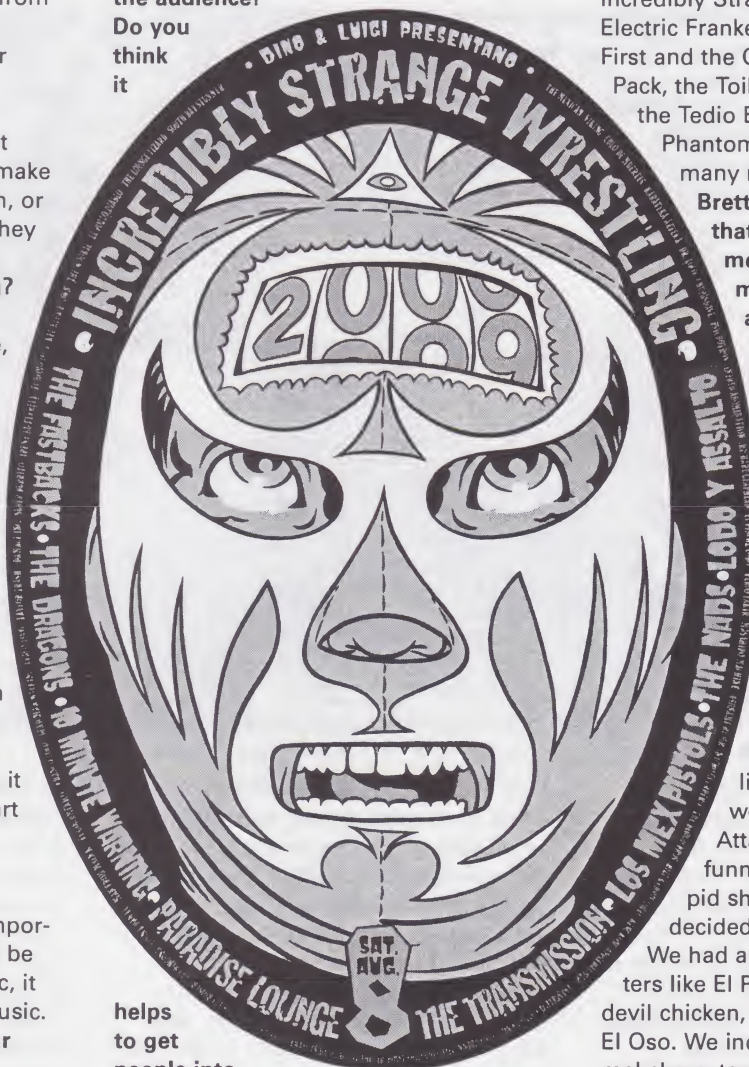
Brett: Are there any matches that stand out? Because for me, it's that Barbed Wire match. I heard stories about you guys rushing people to the hospital after that match.

Audra: Well, Masahiro Atari went and got around 42 stitches. I guess that was a pretty over-the-top match. It was great, but not necessarily one of my all time favorites. I loved La Rosa Salvaje; whenever he wrestles it's always cool cause he's a bona fide professional Mexican wrestler dressed like an ugly

woman..."When Animals Attack", that was pretty

funny. You've seen those stupid shows on television, so we decided to do our own version.

We had a bunch of animal characters like El Pollo Diablo, the 7-foot tall devil chicken, Macho Sasquatcho, and El Oso. We incorporated all of our animal characters, including Flameus Caesar's Lion, and we had a wrestler dressed as Marty Stouffer. There was a ranger that came out with nets to control the animals. It was our first show at the Fillmore, so we had to mock the hippies in some way or another, so we had these hippies that were looking for the miracle ticket. By mistake they came into the Fillmore, where they thought there was something with the Grateful Dead going on, but instead it was wrestling. They stumbled into the ring



helps to get people into what's going on?

Audra: Absolutely! People really like the merchandise. It opens them up to different characters. They want to know, "who is this wrestler? What's his name? Is he an ISW wrestler or a Mexican wrestler?" They ask all these questions, and the more that anybody learns about anything the more they can appreciate it. A lot of people buy a mask, and then end up wearing it for the rest of the show. The posters are a huge part of it,

totally high, and got attacked by animals.

Brett: It's just great to see someone come out in a bear outfit and wrestle a chicken.

Audra: With all of our matches, the par-

they were holding their meetings in public libraries, we had this big huge fat guy with stretchmarks all over his stomach coming out with a pair or little teeny shorts and a mask, and he wrestled Little Timmy from next door. At the

ed kid wrestle a bona fide Luchador.

Brett: You mean that guy was really retarded?

Audra: Yes, of course, are you kidding? It was just hysterical!

Brett: Why was that guy Flaco Loco



IF YOU WANT BLOOD: He's got it. Reverend Axl Future; maimed, pierced, bleached and unbowed.

ticipants are either really phenomenal wrestlers who can wow 'em with their skills, or they're not that good of a wrestler but have a hysterical character and a great story line. We once had a yuppie with a "Wired" t-shirt and a laptop come into the Transmission Theater and complain about the noise because he just bought a loft across the street and he had a big meeting the next morning. He got his ass kicked, and that was obviously poignant because of all the club closures going on. And when that whole big thing happened with N.A.M.B.L.A., when people found out

end of the match, he cloroformed him and dragged him backstage. We've touched on Monica Lewinski and Bill Clinton, whatever seems to be a current event or touchy subject.

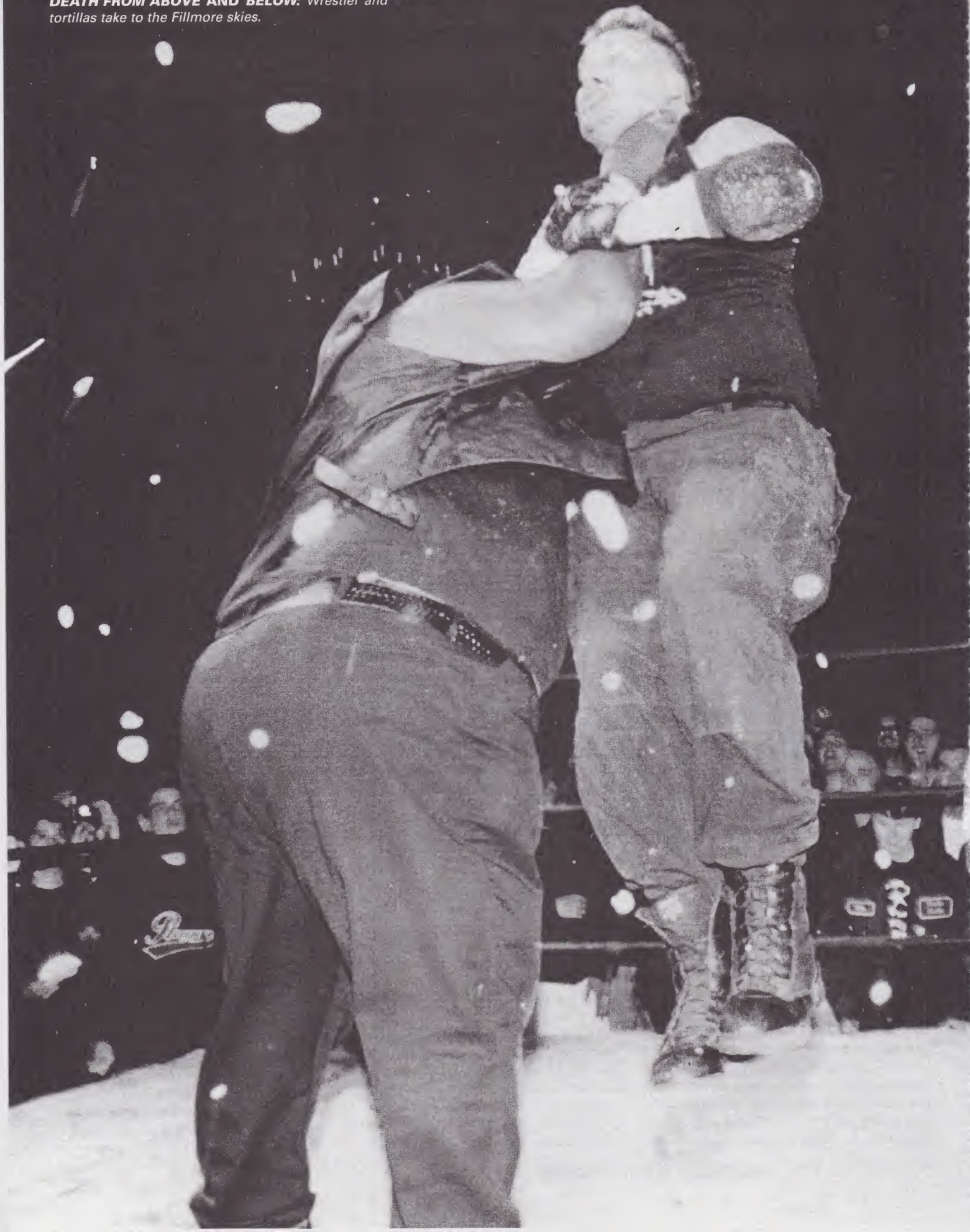
Brett: What was up with the "Make A Wish" match?

Audra: That was actually something I wanted to do for a really long time, then Flaco Loco and his friends worked it out. The Make A Wish Foundation came to ISW with a retarded kid who had his sponsor from the foundation present us with a check for \$7.49. On the basis of that donation, they got to see the retard-

beer bonging him whiskey at the end of the match?

Audra: Well he always does that, but on this particular occasion he was doing it to get the retarded kid away from him; he just wouldn't go down. Besides, the retarded kid got his last wish before dying. He was huge, he was a monster, and he had a helmet and would not go down. So the wrestler was like, "OK, you want to be a part of wrestling? Here's a part of wrestling." Wrestling is cool and fun and great and you sign autographs, but at the same time you get your ass kicked and you never know

DEATH FROM ABOVE AND BELOW: *Wrestler and tortillas take to the Fillmore skies.*



what your opponent is going to do to you. And Flaco Loco, one of his shticks is that he's got this big huge beer bong and before you know it, you're pounding Cuervo and he wins the match. Call it a finishing move, if you will.

Brett: They were pouring tons of whiskey into that retarded kid.

Audra: It was Jose Cuervo, tequila. Mexican, HELLO! Yeah, well, he passed out finally. It took a lot of tequila, because he was huge! And he loved it! He was so happy. He kissed me, he kissed the announcers, he thanked the wrestlers and hugged and kissed them, he was so happy to have been a part of it. We made this poor retarded half-dead child's life.

Lori: How about the midget wrestling show? That was one of my favorites!

jumped in, and I thought, "Oh man! It's on!"

Audra: Another great match was when the Poontanger wrestled Count Dante over custody of their child. They'd gone to court and done all that they could through the court system. They decided that the only way it was going to be decided was in the ring, so they did this whole match for the custody of their child. The funniest thing was afterwards, Count Dante slugging the Poontanger, like the Poontanger's gestation period was two weeks. And then she comes out with a jug of poon juice and a jug of mother's milk, and she's just crazy. And the Ku Klux Klown, he's got a manager who's got one of those air traffic wands. The Ku Klux Klown climbed to the third rope, put one of

other—we had the Catholic religion with Santo Claus vs. Super Kwanzaa and the Matzo Mama. There's just so many that I loved.

Brett: What would your ideal Incredibly Strange Wrestling show be?

Audra: The problem would be that I would want more than three bands! But I guess Cheap Trick, Gary Glitter (if he's out of jail), and the Saints...three of my all time favorite bands...would be ideal. Cheap Trick would headline, and I guess Gary Glitter would have to open because he's allegedly a child molester. I guess the locale would be a 9000-capacity venue here in San Francisco. If we could have bands that no longer exist, having the Ramones would be really cool...Joey, if you're listening, get in touch! Or the

There's someone of every race, creed, color, and sexual preference in ISW. We had the Mexicans vs. the Border Patrol once...One of my favorite matches was a holiday match where we pitted a bunch of religions against each other—we had the Catholic religion with Santo Claus vs. Super Kwanzaa and the Matzo Mama.

Audra — on celebrating racial diversity through Incredibly Strange Wrestling

Audra: Yeah, we had Little Nasty Boy and Cowboy Lang, who I flew in. They're two old professional midget wrestlers, and they're hysterical. The two of them were backstage pinching girls' asses and asking them out. Little Nasty Boy tried to hit on my mother backstage. He asked her out and then he grabbed my ass twice, to the point where Spike had to go, "Hey! Get your hands off my woman!" We have our own midget wrestler now, who is part of the ISW federation. His name is Rasputin.

Brett: Was that the guy who was hiding in the duffel bag?

Audra: Yeah, (laughs) he was a foreign object for that match! Dr. Loco brought him in his doctor bag and used him as a foreign object, and continued to use him as a foreign object. He just pretty much threw him around.

Brett: That was awesome. I was hanging out backstage, and as soon as I saw this midget I said, "fuck yeah, this is going to be great!" Then I saw the doctor open up his bag and the midget

those old aviator leather caps on along with a parachute, and signaled a little to the left and then a little to the right. Then he jumped and the parachute opened, but it was just a little tiny toy parachute. In Incredibly Strange Wrestling, the characters and the matches are all about mocking everybody. Nobody's a racist, nobody's a homophobe, we just like to make fun of everybody! Black, white, pink, yellow, gay, straight, short, tall, fat, skinny, you name it. And there's someone of every race, creed, color, and sexual preference in ISW. We had the Mexicans vs. the Border Patrol once. It was great. The Ku Klux Klown did a match once where he got really pissed off and rode around in the ring on a tricycle with a pickaninny doll dragging from the back of it. It was great because it pissed so many people off, and the people who got the joke, and knew it was all about mocking racists rather than black people, went crazy. We also used to have a wrestler named Harley Racist. One of my favorite matches was a holiday match where we pitted a bunch of religions against each

Stooges. I'd love to get the Cramps to play, and I've heard rumors back and forth that they're interested. Who knows? I'd have to have a few key wrestlers too, like Mil Mascaras and a couple of others. I wish that Prince fit the bill, because he's one of my all time favorites, but his music doesn't really go with wrestling.

Brett: In conclusion, is there anyone from over the years that you would like to thank?

Audra: Yes, Mom, Grandma, Spike, Lori, Teal, Chuck & Ron Don at the Firehouse, Natas and Z, Erin and Fat Wreck Chords, Amphetamine Reptile Records, Silke, Jet and Terror Bull Ted, Brian and everyone at the Baker Street house (sorry about the noise), Dino and Luigi, Mr. Bob, Moss, Damion, Toni Isabella, ALL OUR WRESTLERS, Mil Mascaras, El Santo, Andre the Giant, Bruno San Martino, Andy Kaufman, and all my friends who've supported me rather than committing me. By the way, this is my abridged "thank you list", so don't get your panties in a pinch if we left you out. ⊕

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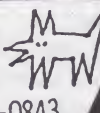
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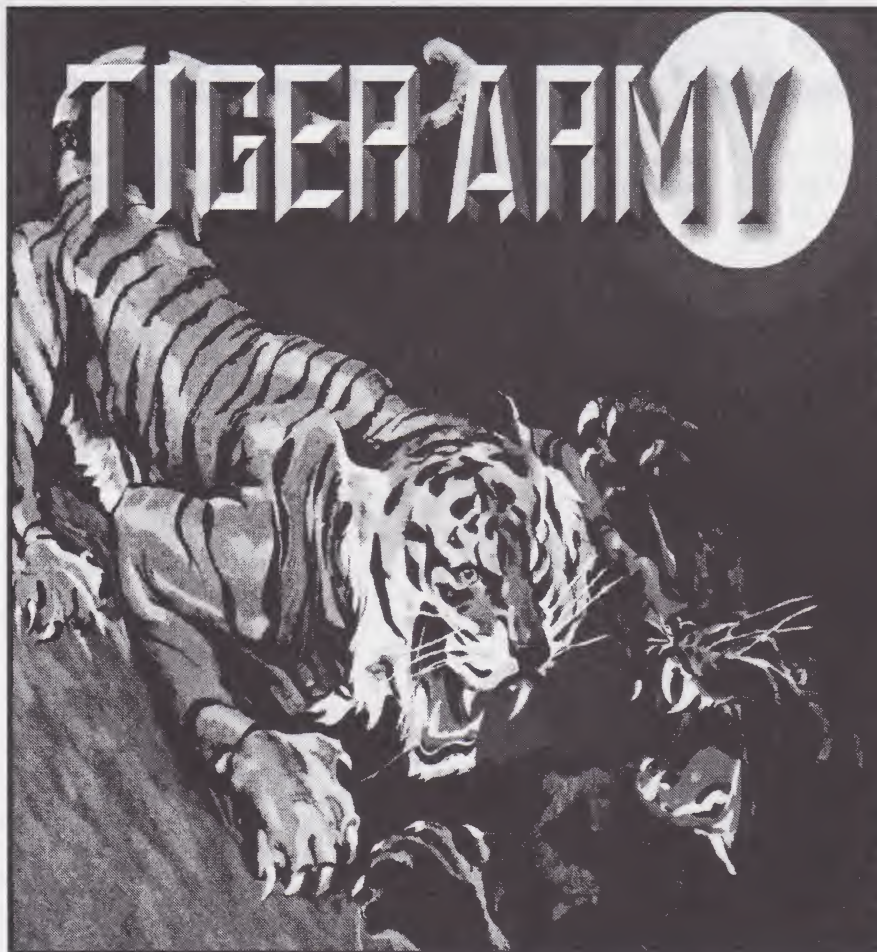
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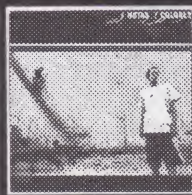
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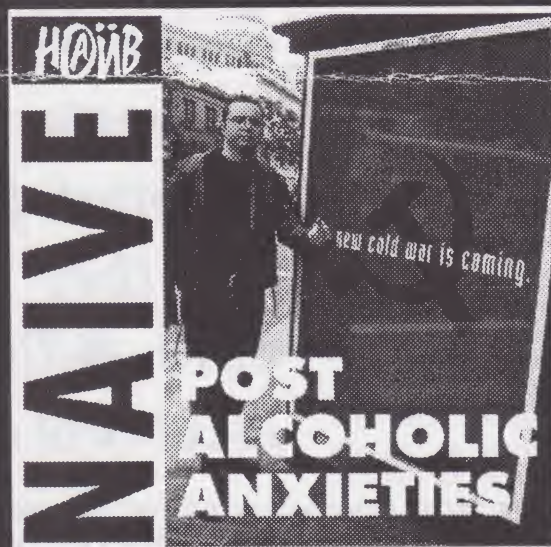
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I received an E-mail recently from some guy who was doing a zine and said he wanted to interview me for his "Punks Over Thirty" issue. I sent a reply saying that it ticks me off when people just assume that I'm over 30. The guy responded by sending me a profuse apology. I actually am over 30, and in my message to him I had never denied it, I just said it annoyed me when people make the assumption. I began my activities in the punk scene in 1977, but I'd appreciate it if people could just assume that I was three years old at the time, although that may be a lot to ask. After getting the apology I sent the guy back a note explaining that I actually had been 30 at one time, but since then I'd switched over to the hexadecimal system. One thing that bothers me is when



people ask for date of birth as a means of identification. I always have to explain that I can't answer the question because I'm someone who lies about my age. Why can't they just ask what your favorite color is for purposes of identification? That's not something anyone would have any

reason to lie about. (unless they have unbelievably crappy taste) As I've gotten older (Editor's note: "old") I've noticed that the percentage of my income spent on medicine increases every year. Recently I went into the hospital for routine tests and they discovered that I have Milles Syndrome, an incurable

disease, which fortunately for

me has no symptoms. I asked the Doctor if there was any reason I should worry about "suffering" from it considering the lack of symptoms, and the Doctor explained that with the amazing progress being made in medical science today, it was just a matter of time before they discover symptoms for my illness. When I asked what I should do, the Doctor recommended that I have myself cryogenically frozen until a cure is found. I asked if my medical insurance would cover me for that, and the Doctor said that that was one of the very few things my insurance actually does cover me for. When I inquired about how long it might take until a cure is found the Doctor said, "Well the common cold has been around for thousands of years, and there's no cure for that". At this point I really wanted to get a second opinion, but my insurance didn't cover it. It

seemed that cryogenic freezing was one of the few things my insurance would pay for, and even that was limited to ten years. Being frozen for a long period of time seemed pretty extreme. I live in California, and I'm not even used to cold weather. I explained to the Doctor that the possibility of being in a frozen coma for ten years was one of the biggest decisions I've ever had to make in my entire life, and that I needed time to think about it. He said he understood completely and suggested that I sit in the waiting room while I decided. On the table in the waiting room there were a bunch of magazines, including some back issues of "Cryogenics Today", which I thought I'd look at to possibly aid me in making my decision. I started with the issue that had Al Gore on the cover. It turns out he was actually in a cryogenic coma for the first year of the Clinton administration, and was still able to fulfil all his responsibilities as Vice President. While I was reading, a woman sitting next to me asked if I was interested in cryogenics. I explained that I was in fact considering having myself frozen. The woman asked what I was suffering from. When I told her it was Milles Syndrome, her jaw dropped, she looked very alarmed, and gasped, "Oh my god!" I asked her if she had ever heard of Milles Syndrome, and she said no, but that it didn't sound good. The woman told me that she was also considering being frozen. I was afraid to ask what her health problem was, fearing that it might be Cancer or something. Finally I managed to ask her, and was surprised at the answer - allergies! I was surprised that anyone would have themselves frozen over allergies, but as I talked to her I saw there was more to the situation than just allergies. She explained that she had two "pain in the ass" teenage kids, and went into considerable detail about her "loser" husband. It made me wonder if perhaps my Doctor wasn't a bit overzealous in recommending the freezing procedure. Talking to this woman really helped me come to a decision. I decided against the procedure for two main reasons. First of all, I couldn't bear the idea of coming out of the coma and seeing how all my friends having aged 10 years, especially considering that none of them look all that good now. Second, I was afraid that when I came out of the coma I wouldn't be able to contact

any of my old friends because all the area codes would be different. I informed my Doctor of my decision, and he was disappointed, but he understood. Several months later I was watching TV on a Sunday night, and 60 Minutes was running a shocking story on medical malpractice, and I couldn't believe my eyes. Right there on 60 Minutes was footage of my Doctor, who 60 Minutes is trying to interview about giving patients expensive and unneces-

sary, and dangerous procedures! His receptionist tells Mike Wallace and the crew that the Doctor is with a patient, and that they will have to wait, but instead they barge in, and catch my Doctor running down the back stairs. They chase him into the hospital parking lot, and he's running to his car holding a briefcase in front of the camera, and he's saying, "No comment. Talk to my lawyer." I couldn't believe that I was almost duped by this guy, but the saddest part of the 60 Minutes expose was the interview with the father of two teenage kids. It turns out that his wife had been in a cryogenic coma for the past two months, and her only health problem was allergies! The more I listened to the woman's husband tell all the details of his tragic story to 60 Minutes, the more one thing came to mind - this guy's a fuckin loser! ☺

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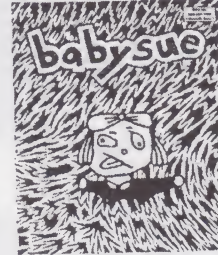
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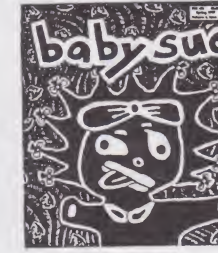
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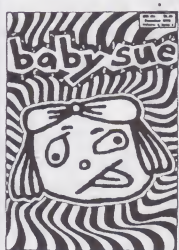
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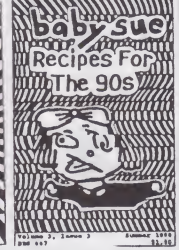
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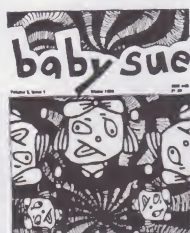
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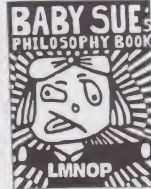
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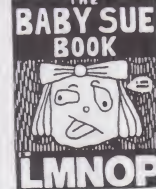
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The ass end of the Green Tortoise.

TIRED AND INSPIRED TO COMMIT MURDER

An Excerpt from the Agoraphobic Travelogue

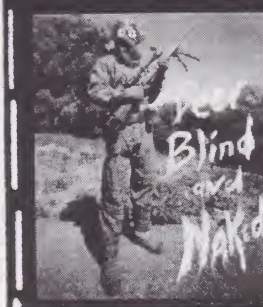
I. The Miracle Men.

Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau. Camp Snoopy to the lebensraum fist of the Third Reich. To get to those camps, the unfortunate targets of Hitler's dark vision had to be transported by some means. At first perhaps by military truck and trailer, then by box cars on trains. Cattle-cars stuffed to a stifling capacity, and then some. If the Third Reich suddenly materialized from the ether to begin its reign of terror again, Hitler himself would put the Green Tortoise Bus Lines in charge of transport. Because those greedy, hippy pigs really know how to pack 'em in tightly.

I made the mistake of listening to someone again and discounting my gut instinct that's been honed to a fine critical edge by many years of listening, watching, and taking notes. My finances were thinning out, so I took the Green Tortoise west coast commuter instead of my favorite mode of transport, the train. I figured it would be a step up from the Greyhound. I'd seen the smiling fliers of happy hippies sprawled out on long benches and bunks. Having taken the Greyhound before, I figured I'd rather stomach some babbling mousketeer rambling on and on about every Dead Show he'd stumbled onto while dosed out of his head from '72 to '95 than listen to some sketchy yokel from Bakersfield school me in the finer art of working a mill, press, and lathe. Plus, hippies are these mythical, slacker travelers known for "taking it easy, brother." Fantasies of "Further" on my mind, the potential for dosing with some groovy rainbow chick on the recline and the incline for a couple of days sounded better than a balls-out 24-hour run scrunched into a thinly-covered metal airline-style chair next to any random fuck as down on his luck as me.

How naive could I be! I don't know how I forgot every experience I had had at the business end of a hippy, in other words, dealing with those ratty-haired, capitalist scum-fucks. Every shorted bag. Every bunk dose. Every single scatter-tooth, smiling, hustling, passive-aggressive, rank, carny, conning, cretinous face looking for that "miracle man." That miracle being the American dream of fist-fucking someone to squeeeeeeeze a couple bucks from them, give them precious little in return, and sitting back on your ass laughing at the dupes who make your comfortable life easier.

On a balmy Sunday evening, I was picked up by a converted 1968 Seattle commuter bus in Santa Monica. The stop was in front of a youth hostel that sits parallel to the Third St. Promenade, a huge, open air, yuppie-tourist-wannabegang-banger closed-street-shithole of booths and shops full of useless, "spendy" trinkets and cafes serving up horrid chi-chi cuisine. I was loaded up on board with all the pomp and circumstance of a gurney jockey handling an AIDS patient on his last legs and in full arrest, and it was off to "The City". In all fairness to the Tortoise Lines rolling in dough and the kind Rainbow Brothers, the trip from Santa Monica to San Fran' was one of the better traveling experiences I've ever had, except for the fact that they don't tolerate alcohol. This is understandable,

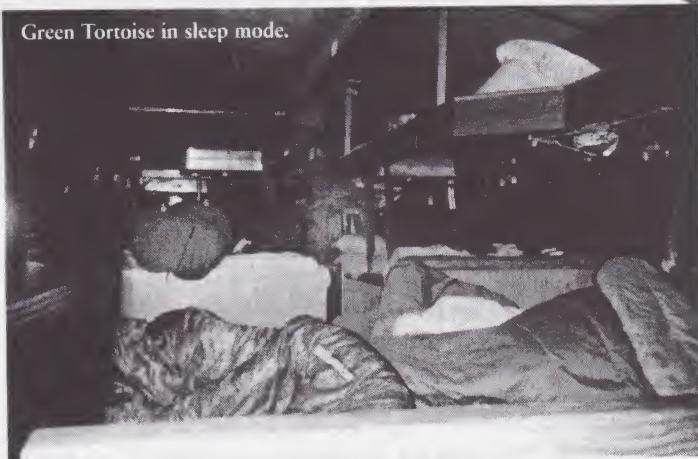


W I T H
**Richard
Tater**

considering their client base. The thought of being on a bus with about three 220 pound, Vietnam vet, "A-Camp" drainbows in full secanol/alcohol psychosis looking to massage their Viking tendencies isn't too settling to most folks. I'd enjoy the floor show, but I'm not their usual brand of traveler. If I had not continued on with the next leg of the trip, I would have had nothing to bitch about. At least for those two days I wouldn't.

In "The City" I had a relaxing yet nauseatingly humorous 11-hour stop over in the North Beach area. After being driven out of the youth hostel by a barrage of fem-folk music, I trekked through the old "Beat" stomping grounds that have been turned into a tired, nostalgic, back-slapping parody of their former mediocre greatness. It wasn't the way I'd like to spend my time in town, but it beat the shit of hanging around a crumbling, 100-

Green Tortoise in sleep mode.



year old, ex-speakeasy/whorehouse full of trustfunders from the U.S. and Europe in that desperate adolescent ritual of trying to fuck everything that moves. Someone should tell these rich, rambling dolts that you don't need to leave your state or country to get laid. Having my fill of the Bay's claim to BoHo fame, I took a stuffed-to-capacity commuter bus back down to the pick-up point at the bus terminal. Packed

in with the eclectic S.F. mix of ferret-like, scamming sales people, bleary-eyed Joe & Jane Blows, and street whackos in full tourettes seizures batting away at invisible foes, I thanked my stupid lucky stars that I was going on a spacious bus with soft benches, bunks, and big beds. (Jesus Fuck! What turnip truck left me in the dust?)

I instantly knew that the next portion of the trip was going to be some painful scene reminiscent of any number of tragedies penned by the more prominent Russian novelists of this century when I rounded the corner to see the huge transient crowd surrounded by a sea of scattered backpacks, tattered bags, boxes, and road/weather-beaten bicycles. It looked like a techno-color version of a soup kitchen line from the Great Depression — As if Ted Turner had just power-tripped into the vaults at Time/Life with pinpoint pupils, white powder frosting his mustache, and decided to spruce up those dreary old pics' with a little good old fashion Disney-like revision. While wondering how fast I could pimp my virgin poop-chute in the Castro for a train ticket, I breathed a sigh of despair. In doing so I caught a whiff of something wretched, and for once it wasn't just me. It was that pachouli and armpit aroma, that smell of mildewed onions and garlic being cooked over a mesquite campfire.

Most of the previous group, along with about twenty others, were loaded up. Included in the bunch were a couple of angry, peace-punk grrrls who had dominated the stereo at the youth hostel (no lateral pun intended) with a bland mix of every hairy-armpitted, folk singing womyn to pick up an acoustic guitar and ape Joan Baez. Packed to the gunwales with rank humanity, the hairy caf-fiend of a driver slowly herded this cattle truck up the 101. We still had a little space to move, so the 2nd runner up in the annual Rasputin look-a-like contest picked up a few more tie-dyed travelers along the way. The cool breeze of the 101 gave way to the 90 degree, humid blow-dryer of the central valley along the I-5. Wet heat, cash crops, mosquitoes, and state penal institutions. We passed many towns whose names I had heard in derision at various bars, club houses, and trailer clan-labs. Soledad, Susanville, Vacaville; every ill ville' and hellhole in the vast, fertile outlands of the inland valleys of central California.

At about 11:00, after being audio assaulted by every dead band the sixties could shit out, they mercifully killed the music and folded out the beds so we could stretch out and sleep. The large bed areas in the front and the rear had about 12 bodies on space that could sleep 6 people comfortably. I'm not a big fan of sleeping with someone's feet in my face. That's not my bag. Hot toe scampi ain't a dish I can dig into, even with someone I like, much less one of the scarf-headed, music Nazis from the hostel. Yes. We didn't care for each other and fate would have us side by side by side, toe to face. Plus another set of piggies on the other side of

my head, and two more pair hanging from the bunk to my right. It was a shrimper's wet dream, but not my turn-on, unfortunately. Call me Mr. Vanilla, but I'd rather obsess on just about any other part of a woman than her dirty stomps.

Needless to say, without alcohol I didn't get much sleep. When

I did manage to pass out a couple of times, somehow my foot got wedged up between this grrrl's legs, with her grinding down on it in her sleep. If she knew it or even instigated it, I'll never know or really care. Sometime in the night, as we rolled out of the central valley and into the cooler mountainous regions of NorCal, the temp dropped down and everyone closed the windows. I'm trying to put into words the smell of that bus as we rolled into a graveyard filling station to gas up a few hours later. Imagine if

someone with a pronounced case of jungle rot went tromping through a sulfur bog, then through a sewage lagoon, took a stale beer piss on that same foot, and then jammed it far enough up your nose to scratch the inner lining of your sinus cavities. It was overwhelming. And I'll freely admit to being a man who, on serious drinking binges, seldom bathes for days at a time. It was that bad.

The hippy express rolled on into daylight and brought us to Cow Creek, a once beautiful piece of land littered with idle school busses converted for living. Rasputin and his Gomer Pyle-looking co-driver spelled out the ground rules for hanging at Cow Creek, and then began taking people's \$3.00 for breakfast. These guys were always prattling off instructions like a daycare worker slow-talking to a



group of toddlers. I guess they got their usual crowd dialed in. Two points for them. I paid my three slats and went to find a pisser and some strong coffee. We were offered towels for a dip in the crick' or a sauna. Just the thought of hitting a mountain stream at nine in the fucking morning shrunk my dick up into my stomach. A sauna was sounding good, as I do enjoy a good sweat, but going into a hot-box with a couple dozen people who seem to be a bit hydrophobic seemed a bit unappetizing. Sorta like rolling into a smokehouse that

someone had made out of a porta-shitter, an un-emptied porta-shitter at that. So I headed straight for the picnic tables, after taking a squirt in a filled-to-the-rim porta-john. A scat-freak's delight, and again not my turn-on of choice. Nothing like viewing what everyone's had for dinner to pump up that breakfast anticipation.

The thirty or so of us that ate were treated to a breakfast of pancakes and fruit salad. It was only three bucks, but there was thirty of us kicking in. That's 90+ dollars. I'd have expected some kind of dead animal or even some scrambled eggs and potatoes, you cheap bastards. I mean the fucking guy who owns this bus line is holding a pig on the back cover of their bus schedule. Someone should inform him that a pancake isn't complete without one of those little snorting porkers ground up, pushed into a tube, and fried to a golden brown. Pigs are for eating, and dogs are for petting, at least in this country.

I probably wouldn't have mentioned this except that as we waited to load up the bus, Rasputin made it known that someone ate but didn't pay. And I thought hippies were all about sharing and helping out their fellow man! His exact words were, "I wouldn't normally hit you up so hard, but this food thing is a losing proposition for us." Flour, a few eggs, some milk, and a bucket of half-rotting fruit for about a hundred bucks. I fed seventy-five to a hundred people at my friends' wedding for \$150.00. I fed 'em well. I fed them lots of meat-laden Mexican food, fresh, chile'd bar-b-que, and even homespun pork-rinds, as it was Cinco De Mayo. These lazy bastards were even cajoling us to help them with the food prep and dishes. I'd take a couple of ARCO-dogs and mud coffee over this grief. Some fidgety geek in an Elmer Fudd cap packing golf clubs and a Casio synth guiltily fessed up to his crime, and then we were allowed to load up the bus.

At one point during the grilling I voiced my displeasure with the whole Tortoise trip to one of the younger Mad Max looking goth-punk-hippies. He was the only one on the bus who could withstand the malignant blasts of my rancid, bitchy humor. He took a rather "fuck it" attitude. He said, "I've been so stoned the whole time that I really don't mind the ride." That pretty much sums up the whole hippy lifestyle in a nutshell. Enough drugs make the worst situations tolerable, kind of like a Dead show. Sure, with the help of tranqs and booze I've slept in the most fucked-up places. But sandwiched between the feet of the Gratefully unwashed and getting the third degree over three bucks would have required an almost lethal dose of heroin to get through the ordeal.

After the chintzy meal, it was off to the thriving hippy mecca of Eugene, Oregon — where the second part of this piece takes place at the World Hemp Festival.

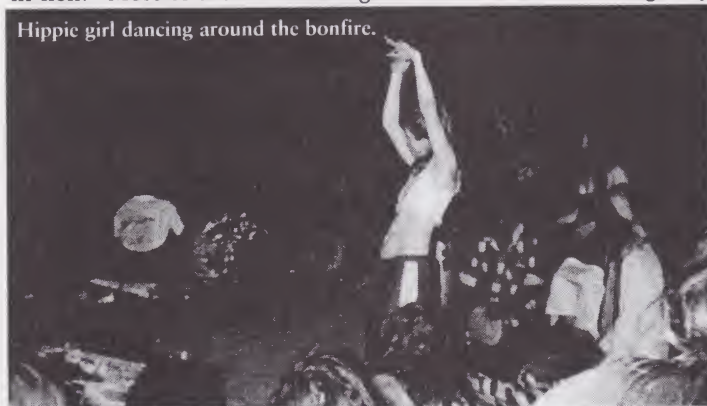
II. Ghengis Khan Job

Hemp. Marijuana. Mary Jane. Grass. Ganja. Gangster. Pot. The hippy culture has more names for the plants of the cannabis family than the Eskimos do for snow. Like snow to the Eskimos, Cannabis has a multiplicity of uses. As many of you probably already know, hemp can be used to make paper, rope, medicine, clothing, fuel, building products; just about every aspect of the

timber, fiber, and petrol-chemical industries can be replaced with products from the cannabis family. For an in-depth look into this subject, I recommend Jack Herer's book, *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*. Even if you hate hippies and want to keep pot illegal just to watch the fuckers go to jail and get sodomized en masse by real criminals, you can get a good look at how you're being fucked over by industrialists who the hippycrit capitalists can only dream of being.

Of course the only thing the vast majority of the throngs of trustafarians care about is smoking the "little weed with its roots in hell." Most of them couldn't give a shit about, assuming they

Hippie girl dancing around the bonfire.



I basically stated that I'll stop drinking from styrofoam when they stop shitting out kids left and right like it's a pre-industrial, agrarian economy that depends on mass manpower to run it.

can even contemplate, the nature of the vast corporate conspiracy to keep the plant illegal, as it would take money away from big industry and put it into the hands of farmers and less polluting and resource-depleting modes of commerce. They just want to smoke the shit till they're unable to perform the most minimal functions beyond breathing or reaching for a cup of water to peel

the cotton off the roofs of their mouths. And for just reasons like, oh, civil liberties, I support them in their quest. I couldn't give a shit about what they put in their bodies. I'd give them 90% pure smack if someone put me in charge of the planet. Just let them grow all the pot they want and maybe they'll go away.

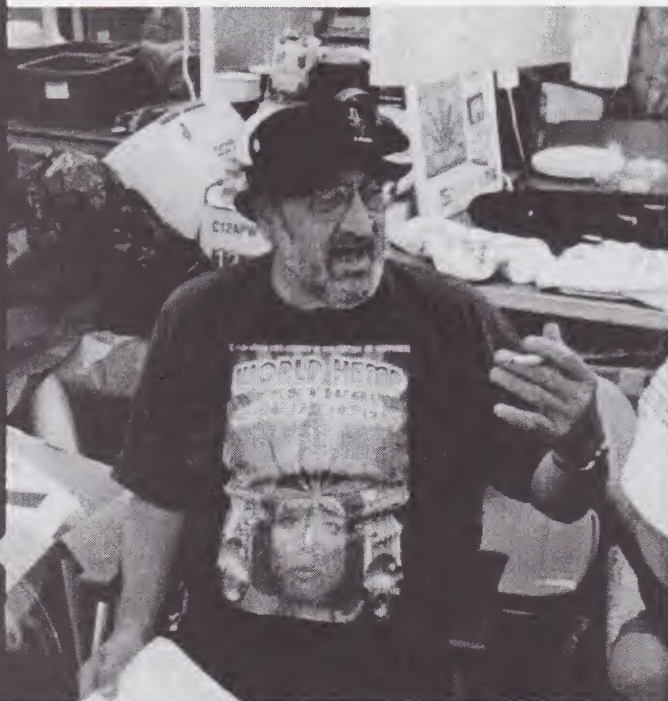
The World Hemp Festival. Funny how a guy like me that despises these vacant-as-a-Houston-high rise trolls puts himself in with about 25,000 of the wanderlust bastards. Just masochistic, I guess. But I have to admit I secretly love the hippies. They're my favorite people in the world. I love their sarcastic sense of humor, and their ability to perceive and perpetrate sentient acts of irony. Their originality and ability to stand out from the crowd as individuals, a mass of "iconoclasts", truly makes them the beautiful people. I am of course being a bit facetious here, a bit ironic. Like most other groups of homogeneous sheeple, I loathe the fucks.

Hippies have no sense of irony and no sense of humor. I lump them in with other humorless groups like cops, politicians, the military, and right-wing Jesus Freaks. Blissfully unaware of it themselves, most hippies have a great deal more in common with

HIT SQUAD

the aforementioned groups then they'd ever really care to admit, except that they seem to get laid more. But they're just as obstinate, short-sighted, and conformist as their dreaded enemies.

You think I'm wrong, maybe? Here, I'll illustrate by exam-



JACK HERER: Activist and author of *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*

ple. Since I've lately been babbling about the Third Reich, I'll compare a Nazi rally at Nuremberg with your standard Jerry Garcia show. Besides the coincidental 4:20-4/20 blurb I shot out two columns ago, each mass meeting is headed up by a demagogue who is antithetical to the causes he is peddling or perpetuating. The veggie, pothead peaceniks worship at the altar of a cheeseburger-gobbling, chicken-pickin', country boy of a smack junkie who didn't seem to give a fuck about any of their causes, while a short, alleged one-testicled, failed artist of a gimp fronted for the *Übermenschen*. Each group is riddled with paranoia and fear of some perceived "other". There is uniformity in both camps. Oh no, you say? Try walking around a hippy crowd without a tie-dye, patchworks, and a red-yellow-green knit cap on. They'll practically avoid their eyes like a Hasidic Jew passing a Golem on the streets of Israel. And both parties have an undying veneration for childbirth.

This cult of the kid is probably the most disgusting trait of these rutting boobs. Fuck all you want, but let's keep the sucklings down to a minimum. A handful of times during the weekend I heard small groups of mostly women going off on "redneck trailer trash" and all their perceived faults and eco-destructive ways of living. Their choice of conversation topic was probably due to the fact that I was in the area, and I got that blue-collar, peckerwood vibe coming off of me like a pitch-pipe being run through a ten-thousand watt sound-system. At one point a small klatch of them, most of whom were bobbling and breast feeding a small army of bastard offspring, started going off on me because

I was drinking my coffee from a styrofoam cup. Oops. They fucked up by giving me an opening to edge into their conversation. I basically stated that I'll stop drinking from styrofoam when they stop shitting out kids left and right like it's a pre-industrial, agrarian economy that depends on mass manpower to run it. If they hate consumerist society so much, they should stop making more consumers. Your six kids are going to gobble up a shitload of collective resources in the land of the home/free of the brave, Ms. Rainbow Eagle Feather. I'll drink out of one of the crumbling ceramic bowls people were peddling for half a sawbuck when these prolific breeders start using abortifacient drugs or at least condoms. It won't stop the spreading of crabs and lice that are jumping off their bodies like rats from a sinking garbage scow in a New York harbor, but it'll help preserve the sanctity of this whirling rock they so allegedly love.

I also let them come to the stark realization that they're really not all that different from the trailer park dwellers that they were just cutting up on. Okay, their trailers actually move (they're literal mobile homes), they smoke pot instead of drink tons of piss-water beer, they listen to the Dead instead of Garth Brooks, and they wear patchworks instead of gingham, but they're really just a flip-side of the same record. The same blackened, toothless mouths, shitty tattoos, terrible music taste, unwashed bodies, tattered rags, and homes packed like a sardine can full of kids from different fathers. Wipe your own ass first before complaining about the smell of another person's soiled pants.

I've gone off on the bad and ugly, now for the good. The only hippies I do show an affinity for, and part of the reason I was at the Hemp Fest (because it sure wasn't for the music), are the hardcore activists. I've met a few of the biggies up here in the great, clear-cut Northwest. Despite their free-love, curry rice, and save-the-children banter, I find them the most agreeable of the bunch. The one percenters of the group. The ballsy few of them that stick their heads out on the chopping block for the local, state, and county fuzz and barren-brained idiotic propagandist dupes like Drug Tsar Barry McCafferty to take a swing at. They alone make the bug-infested ranks of junkies that march to their drum beat more noble than your common, suburbanite prole. Old school activist heads like Jack Herer, Sandy Burbank, Dennis Peron, and the brash "Fuck the Pigs" stylings of Bill Conde are the cream of the crop of an otherwise lackluster bunch of slackers and transients.

It's a sad state of affairs in this country when a bunch of druggies are about the only people fighting for legitimate civil rights, but that's the real state of the union. There's no external bogeyman to prime the pump that can drill away at your wallet any longer. Race baiting, Jew baiting, and the Red Menace are dead myths of the past. Something has to keep the war machine running. Every authoritarian state needs that "other" to fuel the fires of paranoia, and who gives a fuck about a junkie? They're the perfect demons to unleash a budding police state against. I've always joked to my few friends that the only thing I hate more than the War on Drugs is a junkie, but drugs ain't the problem. It's the state that's taxing your income to incarcerate people who are merely habitual addicts that need help that is the fucking problem. That long stretch of highway I travelled on with a prison at every other town is a booming business. A vast central valley gulag up the I-5. It's the third fastest rising employer in California behind the McService industry and temp-agencies. The prison guards' union is now one of the largest unions in this country, and it's still grow-

RICHARD TATER



DAMNED DEPRAVED HIPPIES! A deal goin' down.

ing. It's a juggernaut that threatens everyone. History has shown that if a penal system is set up on the basis of one premise, it will remain to be used for others. That's the true nature of this beast. Cells don't remain vacant for long.

Even if you're not indulging in drugs (alcohol and tobacco don't count, even though collectively they're the biggest killers of the bunch along with legal prescription drugs), you're paying for these prisons. You're paying for the evil, corrupt guards that come out after two years to swell the growing ranks of law enforcement personnel, who will terrorize you on a daily basis with a never-ending litany of complaints. Petty laws will keep shitting forth, bureaucrap will keep polluting the common well; and all of it will end up extracting more of your time, money, and sanity.

Sure, I may have just spent a great deal of time bitching about hippies, but I've never had any reason to fear a single one of them. They're like religious missionaries, in the sense that they're very easy to avoid and scare off. I save my fear and true unabashed hatred for those who have earned that badge of dishonor. If hippies were the worst that society had to offer, then this world would be a wonderful place. Unfortunately, they're not. There are far worse things out there waiting to pounce on you at a moment's notice. Just give these twinkle-toe twirlers their drugs, cut down or at least put a halt on the police state, and let's move on to avoid them both. Let the cops arrest some real criminals for a change (such as hack writers like myself), and give the druggies all the narcotics they want. Maybe then we can stop the madness on both sides of the fence, stop this incarceration nation, and make swine like the Green Tortoise bus lines go out of business. If heads could grow their own dope, they'd have the funds to afford some quality transportation instead of spending all their income on a green leafy plant that's as easy to grow as a fern. Then maybe the smile could get knocked from the Tortoise's Dead-greed-head owner, and he'll be forced to look at that succulent pet of his with new and hungrier eyes.

On my way back down south I'll be taking the train. I can bring a fifth of "Maker's Mark" on board, stretch out without four sets of grimy toes in my mug, and not catch any grief over one of my disgusting habits. That's the way it should be for all drug addicts. ⊕

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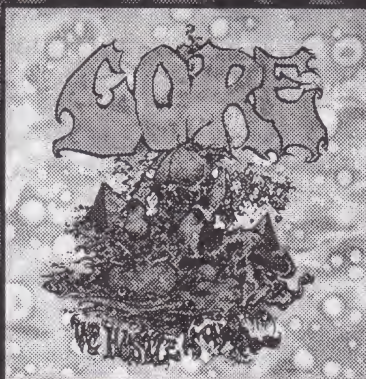
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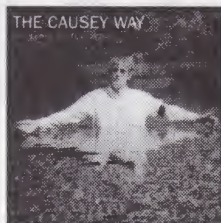
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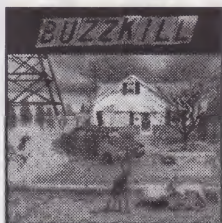


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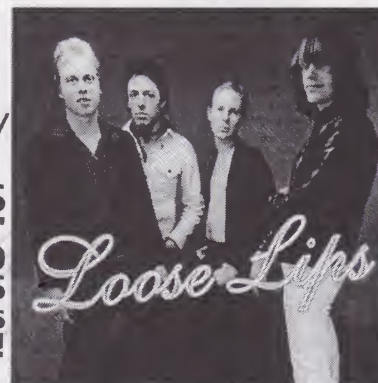


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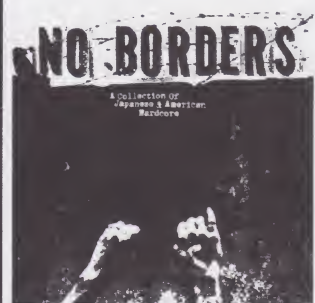


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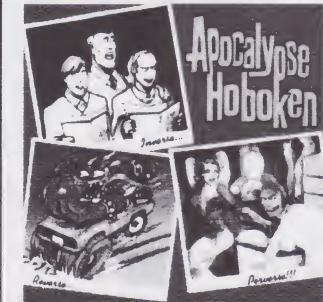


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the DIMESTORE HALOES

Interview by Patrick Grindstaff, Photos by Christiana.

Who are the Dimestore Haloes? What are the Dimestore Haloes about? The Dimestore Haloes, simply put, are a rock 'n' roll band in the tradition of the Rolling Stones, the Clash, and the Replacements—a passionate, energetic, poetic outfit with intelligence, soul, and great command of the melodic power of rock 'n' roll. Like all great rock 'n' roll bands, the Haloes represent the spirit of defiance, rebellion, and energy. The band's aggressive, catchy, classic punk sound draws from three decades of brilliant rock 'n' roll influences. The Haloes take the sound and spirit of old-fashioned, late 50's rock 'n' roll and blues fury, and marry it with the passionate guitar buzz of early 70's glam rock and the dynamic swagger of 70's punk. You will hear echoes of Chuck Berry, Keith Richards, Marc Bolan, and Johnny Thunders in the music of the Dimestore Haloes. But this is no "retro" band—this is a band for the late 90s and beyond. A creative band with soul and integrity playing anthems that speak of today's troubled times in the same way that the best rock 'n' roll has always spoken of its times.

Formed in 1995, the Dimestore Haloes have already produced several brilliant recordings that back up their bold stance as creators of genuine rock 'n' roll. The band's 1997 full-length debut on VML Records, "Thrill City Crime Control", accompanies critically acclaimed singles on Junk, Pelado, and American Punk Records in the impressive Dimestore Haloes discography. In the Spring of 1999, the band is set to unleash its best work to date, the "Revolt Into Style" CD. Look for the CD on Pelado Records and seek out all the band's essential vinyl, if spirited, angry, exciting Punk Rock moves your soul. The Dimestore Haloes are a living embodiment of true devotion to that sacred treasure we call Rock 'N' Roll.

—Josh Rutledge

PG: First off, tell us who's in the band.

Chaz: I'm Chaz Halo and I'm the lead howler and junkshop Gibson gunslinger.

Jimmy: I am Jimmy Reject, the psychotic hitman of the drums, and in case no one else mentions it, Barry Bang is the flamboyant socialite on rhythm guitar who couldn't be with us this evening. He's getting his nails done, I think.

Marcus: I am Marcus and I am a bass lion! Hear me roar, motherfucker!

PG: Chaz, knowing that you've had members come and go over the years, what keeps you motivated to continue the band?

Chaz: It's because I'm obsessed with rock 'n' roll. I absolutely live for three chords, cool shoes, and hate. Old records, old books, junk rock 'n' roll culture...I am a walking history of the big beat, man! And I can't stop, I'll never stop until I'm all dead and shit. The people who have left the band either didn't feel the same way or wanted desperately to be rich



and famous or whatever. The four guys in the band now are the real Haloes. We're a gang and a band.

PG: I've noticed some bands out there using the punk scene to get popular, yet in interviews they try to play it down, saying that they're *just* a rock band. My question to you is, are you a punk band first and foremost?

Marcus: Yeah, we're a punk band. Cuz we're angry, see?

Chaz: Of course, sure we're a punk band. But there's rockabilly, glam, pop, blues, country, and new wave in there too. The punk under-

ground is our home and we are a punk band, but all the great punk bands tried to expand the boundaries a bit, and that's what we do.

Jimmy: Primarily we're a 77-style punk band, yet with divergent influences. The reasons some bands play down their punkness is because they want to expand their commercial horizons. There's nothing wrong with making money, but when you deny your roots to do it, fuck off.

PG: I've been following you guys since the beginning and I've noticed a slow but steady increase in your popularity. Have you

noticed this? Have you made an effort to move along at a pace that suits you rather than shove your band down people's throats?

Chaz: We're already doing all we ever wanted to do, and that's to attract the outcasts like ourselves who don't fit into any scene and give them a home, and just simply make records that people will still dig in 20 years' time. Of course in the punk business, like any other, if you don't make friends and kiss ass and "network", you'll go nowhere. The real misfit punk rock 'n' roll rebels already know us and love us. So what if they're outnumbered by plastic, fake, gossiping scenester trash? Too many punk bands are too career-obsessed these days. This is my *life*, not my job. Of course any rock 'n' roller wants to be as big as possible, but we're not bending over for anyone to get there. We'll make our own way. We were born rock 'n' roll stars, we don't need anybody's Grammy award or limousine or opening slot on the Offspring tour to vindicate us! We're dirt-poor and mentally ill but we've got style, motherfucker!

Marcus: Our records are selling pretty well and it's good to know some kids still love rock 'n' roll.

PG: In interviews in the past, you've said things that are somewhat controversial. A lot of it is sarcasm or tongue-in-cheek but it really does seem to piss people off, especially other punk bands in your area. Is there a reason for this, or are people too easily offended?

Chaz: We're mostly talking about self-important people with no sense of humor or perception. These people don't think that we're entitled to our opinions and insist on taking the most harmless statements personally.

Marcus: There's, like, this unspoken rule which says you can't be honest about your hometown scene. Mostly the people we've offended deserve it. If you want to get anywhere in Boston, you have to hang out in clubs and kiss a lot of ass. We don't do that. **Jimmy:** Most punks want to hear a band say "DIY! Unity! We're doin' it all for da kids." To me that sounds like "we love you Las Vegas! It's great to be here at the Sands Ball Room!" It's just diplomatic bullshit designed to win fans.

Chaz: And really the Dimestore Haloes just don't like people. We're not unfriendly at all, but we're all fairly socially-dysfunctional, and tend to be blatantly honest. We're not here to win friends, we're here to make classic fucking rock 'n' roll records.

PG: I know you guys really try to support bands that are like-minded. Drop a few names of newer bands that you like.

Chaz: Y'know it's funny, all the young punks get on the internet and say things like "the



Haloes are rock star assholes, they only care about themselves." But in reality we're very into helping like-minded bands any way we can. I love the Dead End Cruisers, the Beat Angels, Moral Crux, the Upsets, Chinese Takeaway, Libertine, Bladder X3, the Chemo Kids, the Backyard Babies, etc. There's lots of great new rock 'n' roll out there, too bad nobody's buying it.

Jimmy: There are as many good bands now as in 1977. The US Bombs, the Fuses, the Stiletto Boys, and the Swingin' Utters are all great.

PG: OK, I have a question about your use of the word "glam." I think you guys are a straight-up punk rock 'n' roll band with glam influences, seeing as a lot of the early punk bands did wear eyeliner, etc. Yet to some, glam remains a negative word. What do you think?

Jimmy: All of the proto-punk bands like Iggy, the Dolls, and the MC5 could also be defined as glam.

Chaz: We just want to look swank! And man, a cross between Elvis, Sid Vicious, and Ziggy Stardust is unbearably swank! That's what we go for, violent androgyny. It's only macho,

thick-necked, brain-dead, shaven-headed sub-morons who have a problem with it.

Marcus: Y'know, it kinda pisses me off, the whole glam thing. There are all these other bands doing it and getting huge, and we've been doing it for years. A lot of these glam-punk bands look like Poison to me; they've got expensive clothes and perfectly coiffed hair, and they look like they have make-up artists and shit. We're all for looking great, I'm just not into the manufactured look of some glam punk bands.

Chaz: Rock 'n' roll's about looking swank and being tough and having something to say.

PG: If someone knew nothing about the Dimestore Haloes musically or lyrically, how would you describe your sound and message?

Marcus: We sing about what it's like to be one in a billion. The guys in this band are, and I mean this sincerely, unlike any other people I've met. In my 20 or so years on this planet before I joined this band I had never met anyone I could identify with, and all of a sudden I met these guys. None of us belong in this world. We don't take pleasure in the things other people do. We don't fit in with

society OR the counterculture. I used to go to punk and goth clubs in the hope of meeting someone just a *little* fucking different. But all I found were frat guys and sorority girls in black lipstick and creepers. Alienation, from everything, is what we're about.

Chaz: With my songwriting I try to write about hate and depression, and make it danceable. You want fun, motherfucker? We're the funnest band on earth! Really, the music and lyrics are steeped in tradition and romanticism. Picture Kerouac or Bukowski writing lyrics for Social D or the Clash, and you've got us. We're inspired by the Replacements, the Gun Club, Hanoi Rocks, the Pogues, the New York Dolls, Eddie Cochran, old Joan Jett, and the Psychedelic Furs. If that confuses you, you're clueless. Basically, we're four depressed, mentally ill, gun-toting freaks with huge record collections.

Jimmy: We're about fierce individuality and non-conformity. We are not background music for blue-collar drinking binges, we're music for people who like to drink alone.

PG: Most of the lyrics do seem to be serious, but there also seems to be a good sense of

sarcastic humor coming from the band. Some people probably never see this side of you. Are there any funny stories you can tell about life as a Dimestore Halo?

Chaz: For kicks, we once ran around our rehearsal building locking bad bands inside their rooms. This place had padlocks on the outside of the doors. All of these horrible alternative cover bands were in there rehearsing and we locked them all inside. I'm hoping they died, or had to eat each other to survive. Marcus: I remember one night when I was especially drunk and down on my luck. I downed a few vodkas and stumbled down to this shithole called Dolly's Diner, where after commenting politely to the waitress, I proceeded to get this soup and salad dinner dumped all over my pink-ruffled tuxedo shirt. As drunk as I was, I managed to steal some chicken nuggets. I ate a few and then threw the rest at the waitress. The next thing I knew, she was yelling something and I felt myself being picked up from behind by someone very large. Then I remember flying out the door, leather pants and all. I immediately went back inside to give these people a piece of my mind, and the rest, as they say, is history.

PG: OK, what are some goals you'd like to have the Haloes accomplish? Do you plan to tour?

Chaz: We want to do short tours and trips to NYC, California, and maybe even New Orleans or Memphis. We'd love to do Germany or Japan cuz we get a butt-load of letters from there, but unless someone sends us money, I don't know if it will happen. We want to go anywhere that the true religious healing power of rock 'n' roll is still revered and worshipped. So we may be falling off of a stage near you very soon. Marcus: We just want to make a bunch of great records and be remembered as a band that meant something to people. Those are our only goals.

PG: What do you guys do other than the band...any jobs, hobbies, etc.?

Marcus: I work in a group home for the

mentally ill and I aspire to be a rocket scientist, just so no one will say "he's no rocket scientist" anymore.

Jimmy: I work a meaningless part-time job.

Chaz: I'm a hooker with a heart of gold.

PG: OK, any closing comments?

Chaz: You love us! Yep, love and hate and the whole damn thing.

Marcus: Thanks to our fans, without you no one would buy our records! Thanks to the good Lord, without you I wouldn't be an atheist! ⊕

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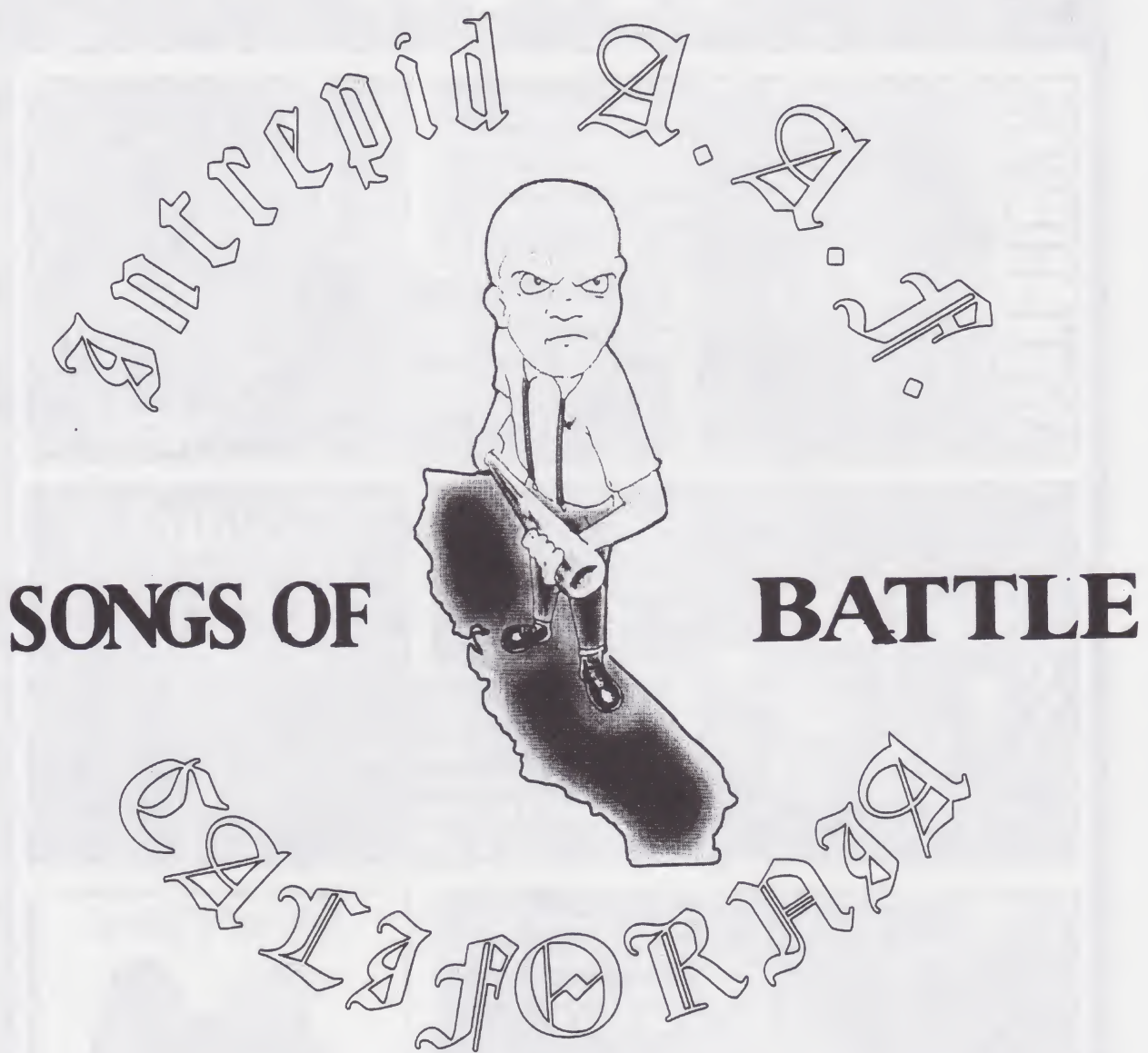
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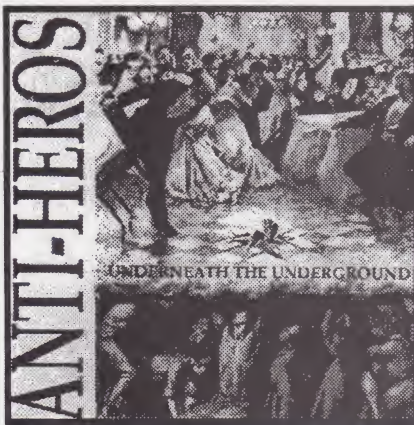
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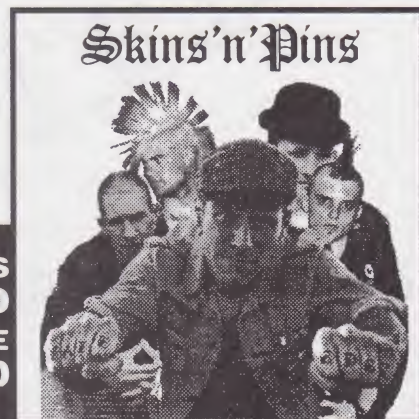
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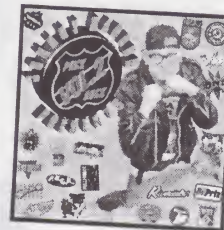
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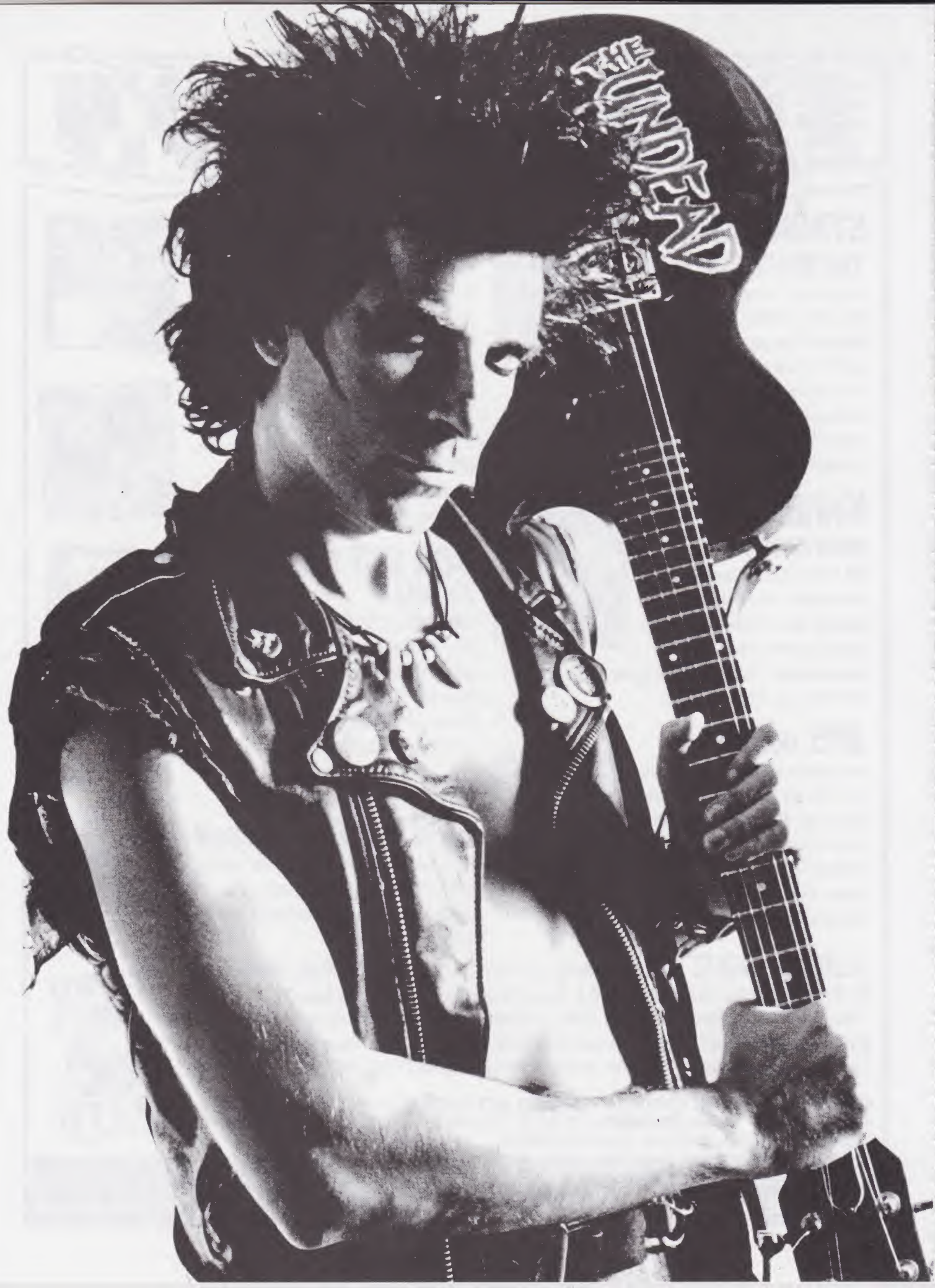


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NEVER the SAY bobby DIE steele story

by JOEL
GAUSTEN

As nearly two hundred people crowded into a VFW hall in Seaside Heights, NJ on a chilly afternoon in February 1998, only a few were truly aware of what they were about to witness. While many in the mostly teenage audience were familiar with the local talent on the bill, some would see the night's headlining act for the first time. The final performers were an out-of-town group called the Undead, a band that hadn't played in the area for several years.

The frontman of the Undead was a man they had, for the most part, seen only on the back of album covers and read about in magazine articles. They knew him as a former member of the Misfits, a band that had grown to international acclaim since its formation over two decades ago. This performance marked the very first time they would meet the person they had been listening to for most of their lives.

When the person in question entered

the room, more than a few jaws dropped. What they saw was a 5'9" middle-aged man weighing 125 pounds, walking with the help of a cane. His appearance, complete with black leather pants and theatrical hair, resembled a cross between the late Sid Vicious and a peacock.

As the Undead began setting up for their show, those who knew of the group rushed toward the stage in anticipation. Those who didn't know the band stood with a combination of curiosity and disbelief. "How in the Hell is THIS guy gonna play? He can barely stand!"

But, as the first notes of the Undead's set rang out, questions about the group's frontman were put to rest. The seemingly meek singer/guitarist became wild onstage, delivering song after song of raw power. Following the set, a chorus of "holy shit, that was awesome" greeted the musician onstage. Some people just stood there with their

mouths open, as if to say, "Whoa! Who IS this guy?"

Born 43 years ago in Teaneck, NJ, Bobby Steele has remained a major force in the underground music scene for nearly thirty years. What is even more incredible is that Steele has accomplished this in spite of continuous physical, financial, and political setbacks.

Steele's first obstacle came to him at birth, when he was diagnosed with the potentially life-threatening defect Spina Bifida. Six years later, while vacationing with his family in Hawaii, he contracted a Polio-like disease that further weakened his health.

Still, Steele dedicated himself to living a full, productive life, even if he was to be ridiculed for it. "I was mocked, picked on, and beat up regularly. Whenever the teachers left the room, four or five guys would jump on

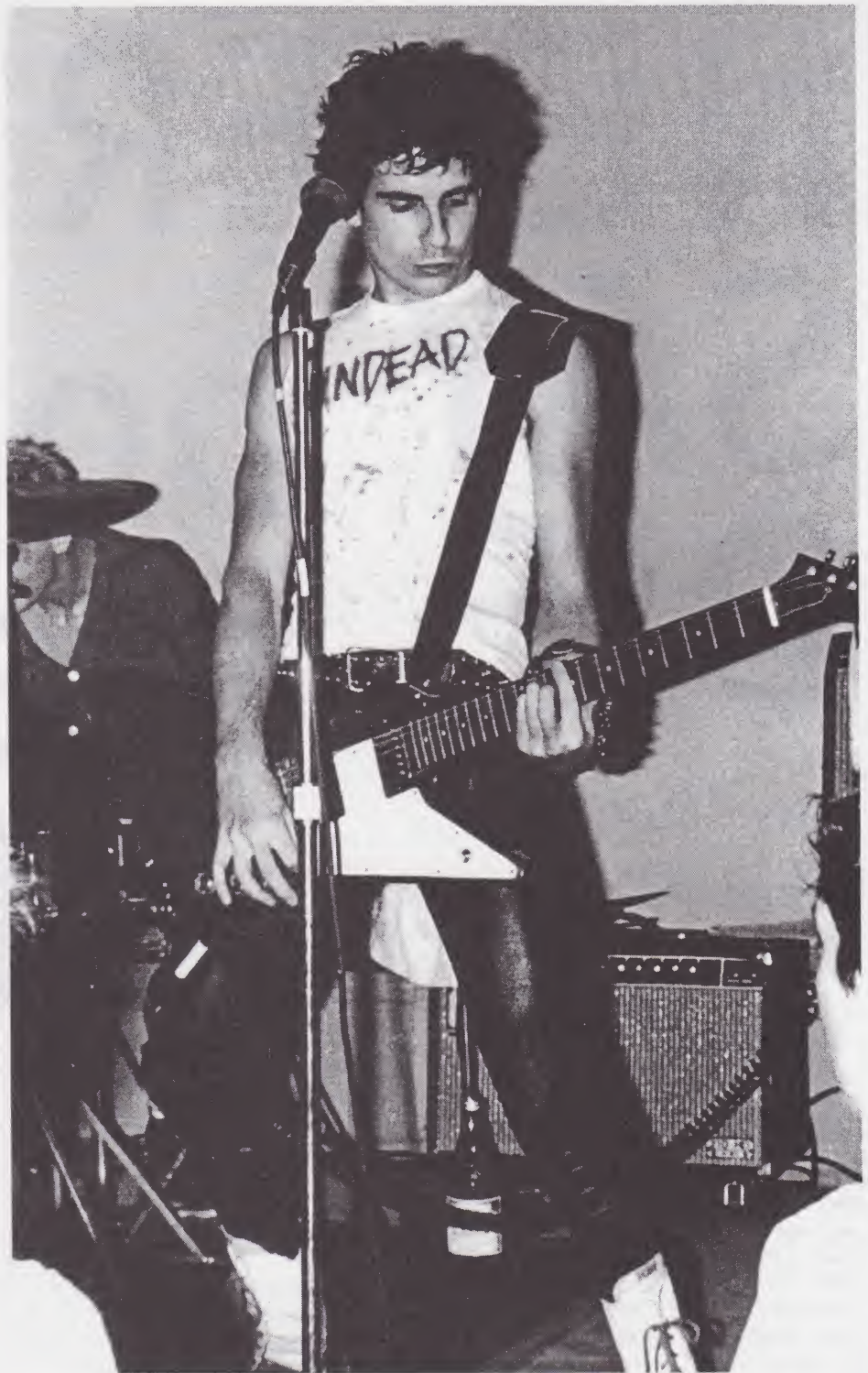
me and start punching me," says Bobby on his Catholic School days. He faced the humiliation that plagued many disabled individuals at the time. "Back in those days (the '50s and '60s), the disabled were not out in public, like they are now. We were supposed to be kept out of sight."

However, Steele wasn't about to let somebody else get the last laugh, saying, "I learned, at an early age, that I was gonna have to find a way to change people's attitudes. I had to develop a good sense of humor about my problem." This good-natured outlook led Bobby to acquire the nickname that he has used for most of his life. "It started as a joke," he confesses. "I hated hearing people mispronounce my real name for so many years. I was partying once with a friend. I used to wear a brace on my leg, and we were always making sick jokes about it. It was made out of steel-thus STEELE. I figured it was a big part of who I was, so I should make the best of it." Steele shies away from revealing his real name to others, including good friends. "Steele" is who he is and always will be.

One evening, a seven-year-old Steele witnessed something on television that would forever change his life. On "The Ed Sullivan Show" were four young musicians from Liverpool, England. Noticing the power of their performance and the fact that they were making all the girls scream, Bobby finally saw a way to make people notice him and not his condition.

By the early '70s, Steele was playing guitar for a number of high school rock bands. Playing straight-ahead rock n' roll in the days when the Allman Brothers and Grateful Dead were all the rage, Steele's groups found it difficult to break into the scene, and they ultimately didn't last long. Determined, Steele continued to play, eventually gaining a reputation as a developing artist. His unique image was developing as well, which also led to more than a few heads being turned in his direction. "I made an impression, that's for sure. I remember walking down the street, and people would throw money at me," he jokes.

As the decade moved on, a new phenomenon was emerging in the music world-punk rock. Bands like the Ramones, Blondie, and the Heartbreakers busted onto the scene, showcasing their sounds at such legendary NYC hotspots as CBGB's and Max's Kansas City. This new movement



suited Steele just fine, and he soon placed an ad in the area's music newspaper, "The Aquarian Weekly", in search of a serious punk band with management. It wasn't long before he received a call from a young singer/songwriter from Lodi, NJ named Glenn Anzalone, who was looking for a new guitarist for his group, the Misfits.

With Steele joining up with Anzalone (who by this time was calling himself Glenn Danzig), bassist Jerry Caiafa (known to the world as Jerry Only),

and drummer Joey "Image" Poole, the Misfits were set for action. By the end of 1978, this classic Misfits line-up was performing regularly at such well-known venues as the Showplace in Dover, NJ and the aforementioned Max's, becoming one of the most popular bands on the NJ/NY punk circuit.

The group's continued success led to what Bobby calls his most memorable performance with the Misfits-a spot opening for U.K. punk gods the Damned. The show, held at Hurrah's in

NYC, drew countless enthusiastic fans. "The crowd was so into it," he describes. "We were able to walk out on top of them. No band can ever top that." The show's success led to the Misfits being offered a support spot on the Damned's upcoming U.K. tour, which the band gladly accepted. Unfortunately, what could have been a

we got fucked." Due to this poor decision, the tour was a financial disaster for the band. Broke and stuck in a foreign country, the band began turning their frustrations inwards towards each other. Steele remembers this time all too well, saying, "I'd overhear Jerry talking to Glenn while we were stranded in London. He was talk-

about how he was fed up with Jerry and wanted to get rid of him. So, I wasn't even thinking about getting kicked out. I was too busy trying to keep things moving in the right direction." If the severity of the split wasn't enough, Steele had to accept another reality-his replacement. The Misfits brought in Jerry's younger brother, Doyle, as their



great opportunity for the band turned out to be a living Hell.

As Bobby puts it, "[The tour] was the beginning of the end for the Misfits. Jerry was sent out there a few days in advance to bring the contracts and have them signed. We weren't about to go all the way out there without contracts. That would've been dumb. When Jerry called Glenn and told him everything was cool and the papers were signed, we flew out there. The only thing was, Jerry never did get the shit signed, and

ing about fucking me over, so I knew I was gonna have a fight ahead of me." Eventually returning to the States, the Misfits began working on new material with Steele and new drummer Arthur Googy, but internal conflicts continued to surface. By the fall of 1980, things had come to a head, and Steele was fired. "When it did happen, I was caught off guard. The previous month they were talking about dumping Googy, and I fought to keep him in the band. Before that, Glenn was talking

new guitarist. Considerably younger than the other 'Fits, Doyle's addition to the group didn't sit too well with a number of Misfits fans-as well as Bobby, who felt that, at the time, "(Doyle) was awful. He was about 15 or 16 and not ready to be in a band." However, Doyle's playing improved greatly in time, and the Misfits soldiered on with varying success until their turbulent breakup in 1983. Steele, meanwhile, began auditioning musicians for a new band. He had

decided to follow a poppier direction than the usually abrasive style of the Misfits, and by 1981 the Undead were alive. Featuring Steele's unmistakable guitar style and his original powerhouse rhythm section of bassist "Natz" and drummer Patrick Blanck, the Undead soon became one of New York's biggest draws. Plans were quickly set for the Undead to record, and Stiff Records picked up the band.

Just as the Undead was picking up substantial steam, Steele's health came back to haunt him. A bone disease suddenly appeared, and Steele was forced to have one of his toes amputated. Unwilling to let this event destroy his livelihood, Steele bounced back. With his tongue placed firmly in his cheek, he named the Undead's debut EP "Nine Toes Later". A strong record, "Nine Toes Later" proved to the world that Bobby Steele was here to stay.

Then, tragedy struck once again. By 1982, Steele had become a heavy user of Quaaludes. That, coupled with severe allergies, landed him once again in the hospital. Doctors suspected that the frighteningly underweight and deathly ill Steele had contracted a mysterious

new disease that attacked the immune system. Those who had this disease—which was yet to be called AIDS—were dying fast. The doctors had suggested that Steele prepare himself for the worst. Fortunately, the grim news had actually been the result of a misdiagnosis. The introduction of actual meals vastly improved Steele's condition, and he was eventually released HIV-free. He has since sworn off hard drugs, stating "I don't even like taking prescription drugs anymore."

Sadly, his return from near-death was not a happy one. Stiff Records had collapsed after a series of financial misfortunes, and "Natz" and Blanck were gone ("Natz" resurfaced in the early '90s as a member of NY's Cop Shoot Cop). Steele was at a crossroads, and he did what he had always done. He pushed onward.

Gathering together as much money as he could, Steele started his own record label, Post Mortem, out of his New Milford, NJ home. Post Mortem's first release was the 1983 reissue of "Nine Toes Later", which again began selling well.

While the Undead were definitely

back in the swing of things, the group's output was continually delayed by innumerable line-up changes. To date, there have been over four dozen musicians in the Undead at one point or another, comprising twenty-six different band incarnations. Never one to play second fiddle to anyone, Steele feels that it is his strong conviction in his ideas and his undying dedication to his music that has caused this trend. "I don't tolerate bullshit", he says. "If (a player) starts slacking off, or if they're rude to fans or roadies, they're gone." Several notable names have passed through the ranks of the Undead, including Robo (Black Flag/Doyle-era Misfits), Vinnie Signorelli (Swans/Unsane/Pigface), Olga DeVolga (the Lewd), Stacey Morris (Lunachicks), and former drummer Steve Zing.

A self-taught musician, Zing had already cut his teeth playing in the seminal NJ hardcore band Mourning Noise by the time he accepted an offer to join the Undead in 1983. Although he remains one of the Undead's longest-running members (serving for over three years), his involvement with Steele did pose more than a few prob-

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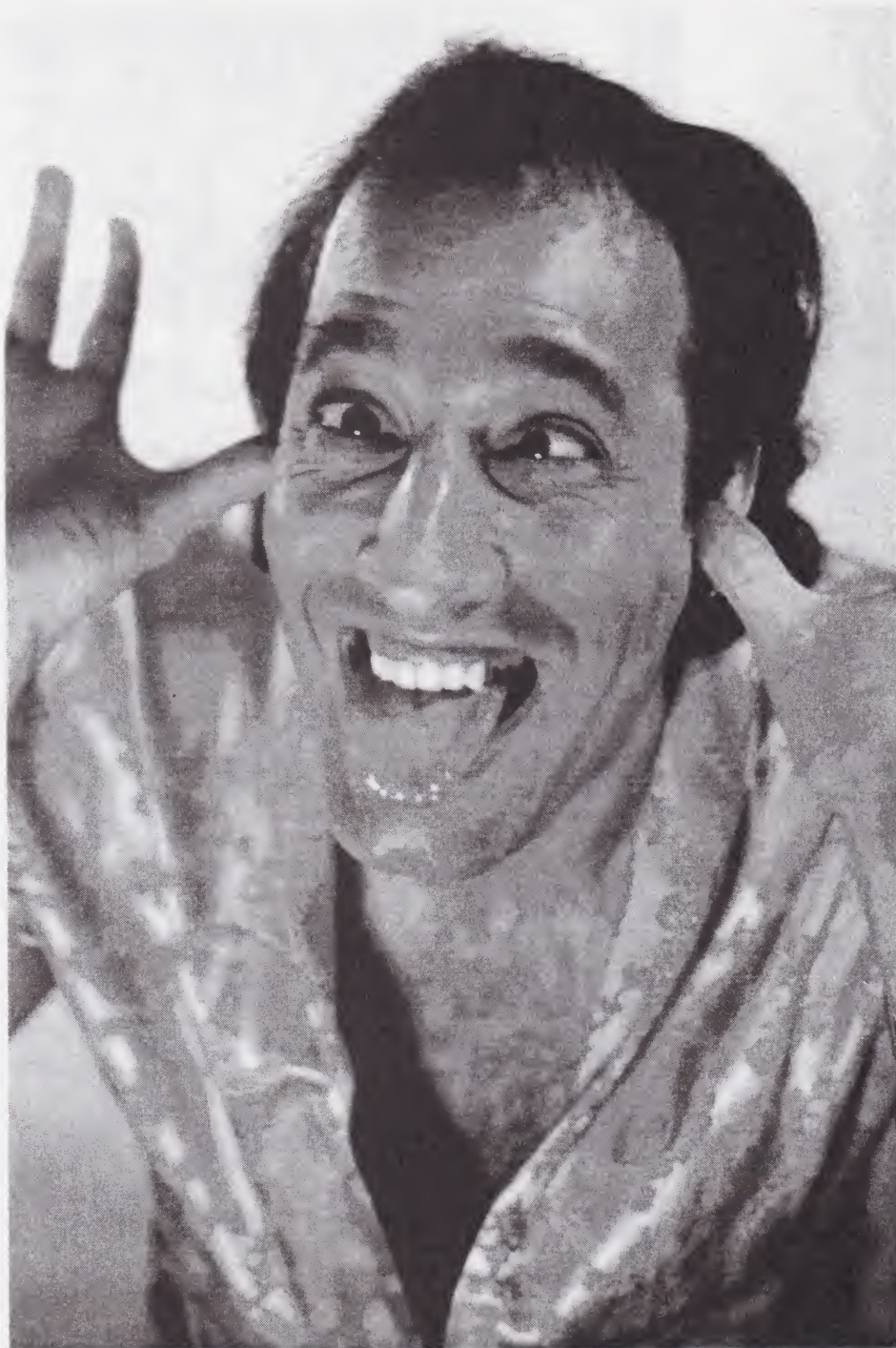


lems. While in the Undead, Zing began playing in Glenn Danzig's first post-Misfits band, Samhain. "Glenn hated it", says Zing of the situation. "Glenn wanted somebody who was just gonna play with him. But at the time, Bobby was paying fifty bucks a night, which was pretty good. So Glenn couldn't say

much." Zing continued to record and perform with the Undead until unexpected health problems forced his departure in the fall of 1986. Currently, Zing sings in the popular NJ hard rock band Chyna and has performed with a NJ-based punk cover band called Rubella Umbrella. "Bobby's got a big

heart. He's really a great guy. I really give him credit for sticking with what he does. You've gotta give him credit for holding with (the Undead) and not changing his style", Zing says.

Regardless of the constant change surrounding the Undead, Steele continued to record and perform as often as



possible. By 1989, he had recorded enough songs for a full-length album. But, as most music fans know, the late '80s were the era of Def Leppard, Whitesnake, and Bon Jovi. The record companies weren't exactly knocking down Bobby's door. "No one wanted to touch (the album). It was a punk record, and metal was king," comments Steele on the difficulties he faced while trying to get the material out. In an attempt to ensure that the Undead had a future, Bobby looked to his past for help. He still had hundreds of those old Misfits records, which at the time had become highly collectable. He sold the

records for \$75 per copy through his Post Mortem mail-order, and he got his money in no time.

The summer of '89 saw the release of "Act Your Rage", the Undead's debut album. With both Bobby's nonstop promotional tactics and a renewed interest in the Misfits (helped along by Metallica's cover of the band's 1978 classic "Last Caress" on their "Garage Days Re-Visited" EP) working in his favor, "Act Your Rage" eventually sold over 20,000 copies. Bobby Steele, the crippled kid from Teaneck, was now one of the biggest selling unsigned artists of the Reagan/Bush decade.

By 1993, Steele had grown tired of hiring and firing people, and began experimenting with backing tapes and other electronic devices. Finding that recording alone meant that his ideas could be realized without losing his patience and/or his cash, Bobby has since recorded every piece of Undead music alone in his home studio. For live shows, Steele now relies on a number of handpicked rhythm sections spread throughout the U.S. and Canada, employing them on an as-needed basis. This makes touring an easier experience for Steele. Wherever and whenever he plays, a band is there to greet him. "I'd like to have a full-time band, but what I'm doing now seems to be working pretty well," says Steele on the Undead's current revolving-door policy. One band that has backed Steele is the Migraines, Indiana's premiere punk group.

The Migraines first met Steele in 1995 at Indianapolis' second annual Sloppypalooza punk festival. "My first impression was that (Steele) was scary and unapproachable. After talking to him, I realized he was very open and warm with a great sense of humor," says the band's fire-breathing frontman, Eddie Migraine, about his first encounter with the punk legend. Steele hit it off with Eddie as well, and the two quickly decided to collaborate. Eddie booked some Indiana shows for Steele, who recruited him and the other 'Graines to play in the Undead. This line-up carried into the recording studio, resulting in the Migraines EP "The Night Has Eyes", which features Steele on guest guitar. While working with Steele, Eddie got to experience first-hand the former Misfit's strong work ethic. As Eddie sees it, "(Steele) is willing to take chances that no one else would. He doesn't give a damn how the general public says things should be. He creates his own rules. He's everything but a quitter, and is one resilient bastard!"

While Steele continued to tear up Indiana and beyond, there were rumblings coming from suburban New Jersey. In 1995, Jerry Only and Doyle walked out of a long legal battle with Glenn Danzig with the rights to the Misfits name. Working with a new singer and drummer, the band returned the following year. Seemingly overnight, Misfits records (including a four-disc box set) invaded record stores, including the ones featuring Steele. This instantly opened old wounds for Steele,

as Only has often used the media as a way to express his great dislike for his former guitarist. In a 1993 interview with *Ugly Things*, Jerry called Steele a "jerk", adding that musical incompetence was the catalyst for Steele's dismissal rather than a hidden personal agenda on his part. "Bobby messed his way right up to getting the axe. He may tell you different-that everybody had it in for him-but basically he wasn't cuttin' it. And I know he doesn't wanna hear that", said Only. Angered by this situation, Steele feels that "Jerry's a fraud. I think he's just doing (the Misfits) for the cash. He doesn't care about the fans, or the band's legacy. He never should've (reformed the band)."

These days, Steele is keeping himself busy. In addition to the Undead, Steele plays bass part-time in the NY pop/punk band Times Square. Formed in the early '90s, Times Square is fronted by Steele's longtime friend (and Golden Gloves boxing champion) Jill "The Zion Lion" Matthews, and features former Devil Dogs drummer Dave Ari. Times Square released their debut album, "Learn It", in 1996, which led to

a number of great reviews and sales. In the spring of 1998, Bobby Steele released "Til Death", the Undead's first album in seven years, on Canada's Underworld Records. The album is a diverse collection of songs, ranging from classic punk ("I Don't Wanna Feel The Pain Anymore") to metal ("Shadows") and '50s bubblegum ("The Thorn In Your Side"). Also included is a cover of a song from his heroes, the Beatles ("All You Need Is Love"). Having taken over two years to record, "Til Death" features Steele on all instruments and vocals, with songwriting help from his longtime collaborator, Dave Street.

Street, one of Steele's oldest and closest friends, has lived a life deserving a story of its own. Over the past two decades, Street has evolved from a self-described "punk comic" (a clip from his late '70s play, "Rock N' Roll Drops Dead at Studio 54" was recently featured as part of a VH1 special about the infamous NY club) to a composer of children's music and a lecturer on environmental issues. His songwriting partnership with Steele began when he wrote the lyrics to the "Nine Toes

Later" track, "A Life Of Our Own". Street's lyrics have turned up on a number of other Undead releases over the years, and he is currently writing lyrics for Steele's next album. "Bobby is a great person and a great artist. Someday I have no doubt *Rolling Stone* will declare (Steele) a genius and the Undead one of the great American bands", Street says.

"Til Death" was greeted by an enthusiastic public, and marked the rejuvenation of Steele's career. Plans for the future include extensive touring, a major merchandising deal, and a series of new Undead releases. Most important, Steele is currently in good health.

With everything that Bobby Steele has been through, it's quite surprising that he's still around. But he's a survivor whose determination has never left him. He remains a man with much more living and creating to do. When, at long last, it is time to say a final goodbye to him, how would he like to be remembered? After weighing the question, Steele replied, "I'd like to be remembered as a person who stuck to his guns, fought the impossible fight, and won". ☺

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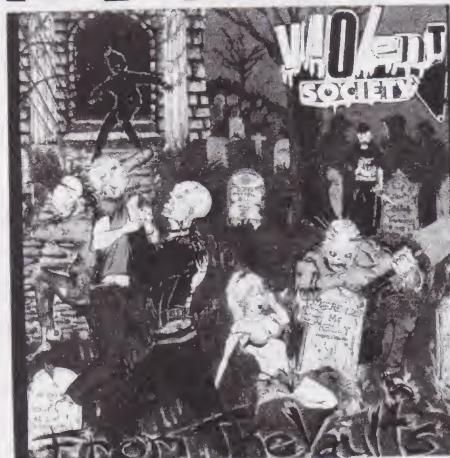
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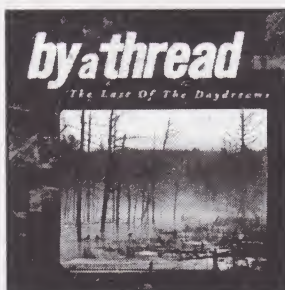
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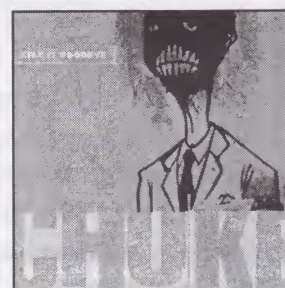
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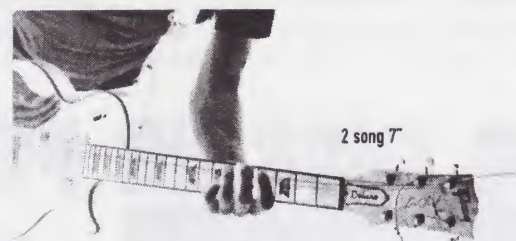
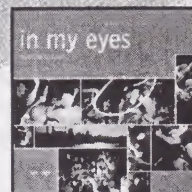


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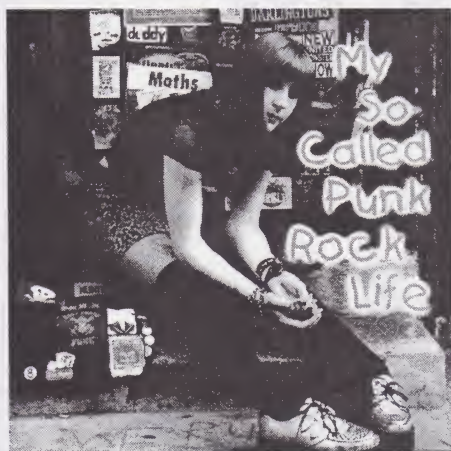
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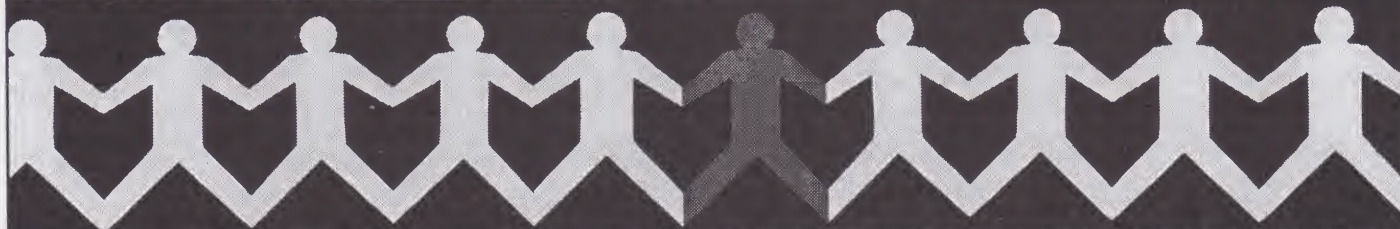
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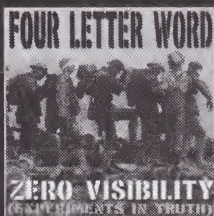
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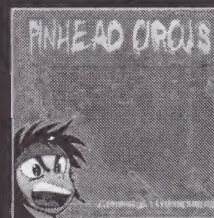


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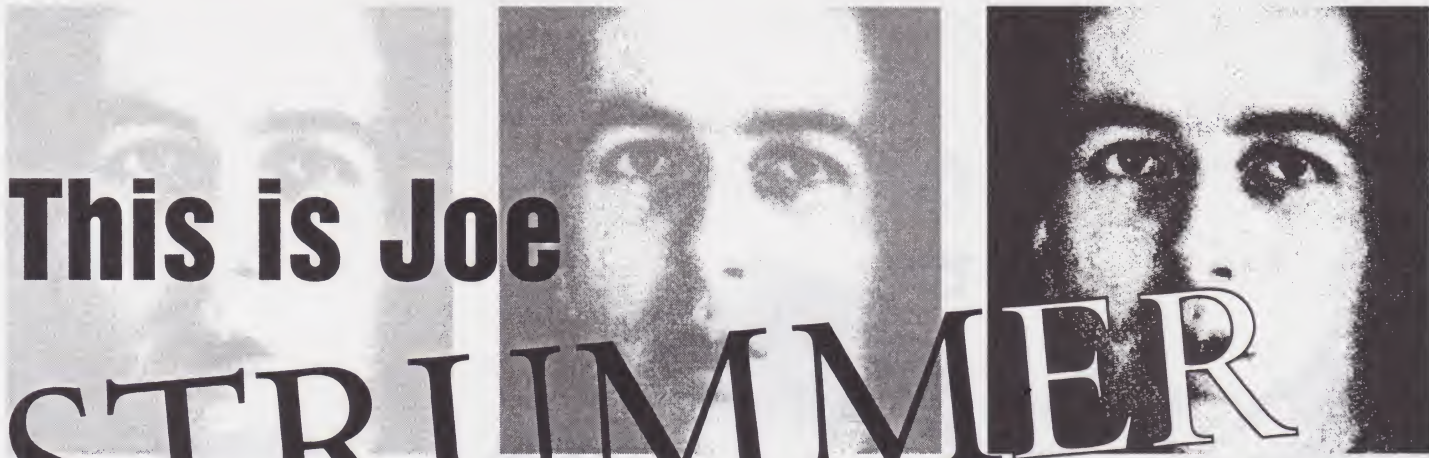
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This is Joe STRUMMER Speaking!

By Dave Johnson

I would run home from high school to listen to the Clash. I would run. And to this day I still think "White Man in Hammersmith Palais" and "Stay Free" are two of the best songs ever written.

The Clash were so exciting to me because more than the sound of entertainment, they seemed to somehow be the sound of freedom. I could barely make out the words most of the time, but there was something in the music that spoke directly to my heart in a language that was even more potent than rhetoric or even poetry. I still love the Clash. I hope they know just how much they gave to so many people. Thousands of kids of my generation related to them strongly - because in the time of Michael Jackson and the general downfall of everything, they seemed to be the last insurgents of what is real and good and true in real rock and roll.

Although I don't envy them for all the shit they got, (the Clash got more vicious and hateful press in England than any of their contemporaries) in the end, who gives a fuck? They were just so great and packed so much sincerity and artistry and strength into their music - those who were meant to feel it did, and as for the rest - fuck 'em!

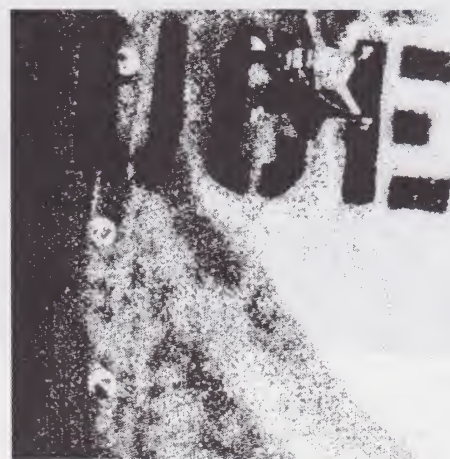
That's what I have to say about the Clash. I'm sitting in my bedroom listening to "Hateful", writing this straight from the shoulder. Mr. Joe Strummer - HARDEST ROCKER EVER. The revolution rock sound lasts forever. I hope they never doubt they did something unique, special and great, because they definitely did in my life, and for that I say THANKS!

- Jesse Michaels, of Operation Ivy and Common Rider

Joe Strummer has always sung like he was letting you in on a secret. Even as he ranted and shouted in possibly the Clash's silliest moment as a band, 1982's infectious dance-punk classic, "Rock The Casbah," there was this air of "Listen up!

There's something else going on here and we're completely fucking missing it!" The man has an innate ability to tap into the desperation of the moment of what's right in front of us, as with "White Riot" and "London's Burning," as well as get right to the heart of what it's about (see the heart-

wrenching "White Man in Hammersmith Palais" or the dramatic apocalypse of "London Calling.") He's been the perennial outsider, which is maybe why he left such a lasting impression on both rock critics and fans. When I asked him about how he felt as one of the leaders and innovators in punk, he flatly stated "Well, in truth I was more like a follower, personally. Other guys really forged the bridgehead. I mean, for that we'd have to go back into the history of punk, but what I feel is that whoever feels it has a got a right to get up and play it like they wanna, y'know? My personal prize would go the Ramones and Jonathan Richman. Of





course, by saying that I'm negating other people like the Stooges. Or any pair of idiots who got up a tune together. Like the Seeds. Man...they were great. Or the Kingsmen, I'm down with that. But as far as this current crop goes, I'd say the Ramones. Jonathan Richman, double-underlined. Five star. Genius."

Which, of course, if we're to think of punk as something beyond what came snott-nosed and screaming out of Britain in '77, Strummer's self-assessment is exactly correct. After all, after spending his youth in a variety of locales (he was born John Mellor, in Ankara, to a British father who worked in the Foreign Service), he ended up playing folk-rock in Wales under the name Woody Mellor.

After arriving in London, he played in a pub rock band called the 101'ers until he met

**If you wanna know
about Sony, it's a
bloody child-slave
labor contract - the
same one that George
Michael had.**

Mick Jones, Paul Simonon and mini-McLaren Bernie Rhodes in 1976. The 101'ers had released a few singles on the Chiswick label and were playing around London. Rhodes, Simonon and Jones told

Strummer that they were putting a group together, thought he was great, but also thought his band were shit. Legend has it that they gave him 48 hours to decide whether he wanted to be a part of this

embryonic Clash. He took 24, making a decision that was to drastically change his life, as well as those of countless kids around the world, who through the Clash, got into this "punk rock thing."

If Topper Headon was the band's joker, Mick Jones the Serious Musician and Paul Simonon the Tall Cool One (apologies to Robert Plant, and admittedly I don't know how they compared height-wise, but face it - Simonon was so much cooler), then Joe Strummer was the Clash's lightning rod; the power and rawness of the music channeled through him like a marionette fueled by bad speed and gasoline, through his legendary Electric Leg up through the manic slashing at his poor beleaguered Telecaster, leaking out the pores in his neck and finally, in barking fits and spits and starts, out past those famously battered teeth. (Speaking of his teeth, at some point during his disappearance from the Rock Radar, he had them fixed. It's now up to Kevin Seconds to carry on the legacy.) And though he's aged (remarkably well, actually), has a family and now does

soundtrack work, he has that same quality that Neil Young does - he could care less for the bullshit of being a rock star, but onstage he's nothing less than one; and I mean that in the best way possible.

Thankfully, offstage Strummer couldn't be more gracious. When I approached him before the show, explaining that we had been told by Epitaph that an interview had been set up and then been fucked over by Nasty Little Man, he said to me "Okay, here's what we'll do. Meet me here after the show, and we'll do the interview then."

The Obvious Questions

After drinking my way through MXPX's set (like there weren't a thousand bands in San Francisco both better than MXPX and more deserving of the opening slot. Swingin' Utters, anyone?), and totally rocking out to Stummer's set (For the record, the Clash numbers that night were "London Calling", "White Man In Hammersmith Palais", "Junco Partner", "Rock The Casbah", "Tommy Gun", "Brand New Cadillac", "I

"So I grabbed the mic stand, and rushed at the nearest BBC television camera and began smashing it."



Fought The Law", and the set-closing reggae jam-out "Bankrobber"), Jeff Bale, Brett Mathews and I met up outside Joe's dressing room. After about an hour, the nice lady from Bill Graham Presents (maybe the *only* nice person associated with that entire operation), said "Okay, Joe will see you now."

Joe said to me that he was really tired, he'd had a hard set, and that he really felt like cancelling the interview. I couldn't blame him if he wanted to - the man looked *wiped*. Somehow though, on the verge of begging, I managed to convince him that it really meant a lot to the magazine, - particularly to me - and that *Hit List* was a magazine worth talking to. (Charlie from Epitaph had warned me that he'd blown off *Rolling*

"So then you moved to a really strong indie label. Obviously Tim [Armstrong, Rancid frontman/Hellcat label boss] is a very big Clash fan. How is it different? Is it night and day?"

"Oh, it's fucking great. I've never been signed to a company that was run by *people*. [laughter all around] I'm really up on it."

Above, Jesse Michaels, hero to thousands upon thousands of skaterats around the globe, writes just how much Strummer's music meant to him. And if the current spate of Clash tribute albums (we've received three here at *HL* in the last six months or so) is any indication, their fusion of punk, ska, and reggae has inspired at least two generations of musicians now. But has Joe really fol-

van right now! In 1999."

Which brings us around to Strummer's own television commercial experience - in 1991, Levi's used "Should I Stay or Should I Go" in a U.K. ad campaign, which resulted in the song re-entering the charts and eventually going to number 1. I asked Joe what people thought about it back then, and any personal animosity he may have faced from it. "Well, I was kind of glad, in a way, because it ruptured the bloody balloon of the 'holier than thou' and all that nonsense. My crack is that I sold my integrity and Mick Jones got all the money." [laughter all around]

"Was Mick more a proponent of doing the commercial or you?"



Stone earlier in the week.) We turned down the reggae on Joe's boom box and got to talking. At first it didn't go so well - I started off an easy question about Joe's contractual problems with Sony, to which he responded.

"It's the same old fucking questions - sorry man, but you can imagine what it's like for me. Let me just have a bitch here. A free one. I never ever bitch, right? If you wanna know about Sony, it's a bloody child-slave labor contract - the same one that George Michael had. And whoever signs with them gets his just desserts, just like I did. The whole shit stinks just like all the smart punks said it did, anyway. So anybody that signs with those cunts deserves what they're gonna get and that's my final word on it."

I proceeded to push the final word a little bit, asking "So after all you had to go through with major labels in the Clash, why did you bother to stay with one?"

"What? You think I had a choice? See, that's what I'm trying to get at - the world's not a big joke, man. It's like a mill that'll grind little chickens in it. For breakfast, lunch and dinner. So don't think that just because your group splits up you're off the hook. Get with it!

lowed the growth and explosion of his progeny? "I think it's cool, but you have to understand, I don't stand around wondering about 'surf-punk' fusions or whatever all day. I think it's cool, I like the beat and I like that people are playing it, but it's not my business to say yay or nay, y'know."

Turning Rebellion into Money.

Punk's *other* progeny are now coming of age as well, settling into an urban or suburban life, thinking back and remembering when - hence the Smiths' "How Soon is Now" popping up in a TV spot for Nissan's Maxima luxury sedan. But Morrissey and Marr aren't the only ones being used to hawk automotive product to aging college-rockers - at the time of the interview, Toyota had just started running ads for their RAV-4 sport utility vehicle featuring the Buzzcocks' classic, "What Do I Get." Strummer: "Well, I didn't [about] know that [commercial]. But hey, everybody - the Buzzcocks were in there slogging it out when tuppence ha'penny wasn't in the offing. This is fifteen years down the pike and they need some dough. They're still at it as we sit here. They're still in the

"No, no, it's not that, it's that it's *his* tune, right? So he got more of the oats for doin' it."

"Oh, because there's a big stink going on right now, because some of the other Kennedys got offered money to use "Holiday In Cambodia" in a Levi's commercial and Biafra said no. So now there's all this crazy legal wrangling going on amongst the Kennedys."

"I suppose they would've been offered a million dollars for 'Holiday in Cambodia'," Joe says - maybe a little wistfully.

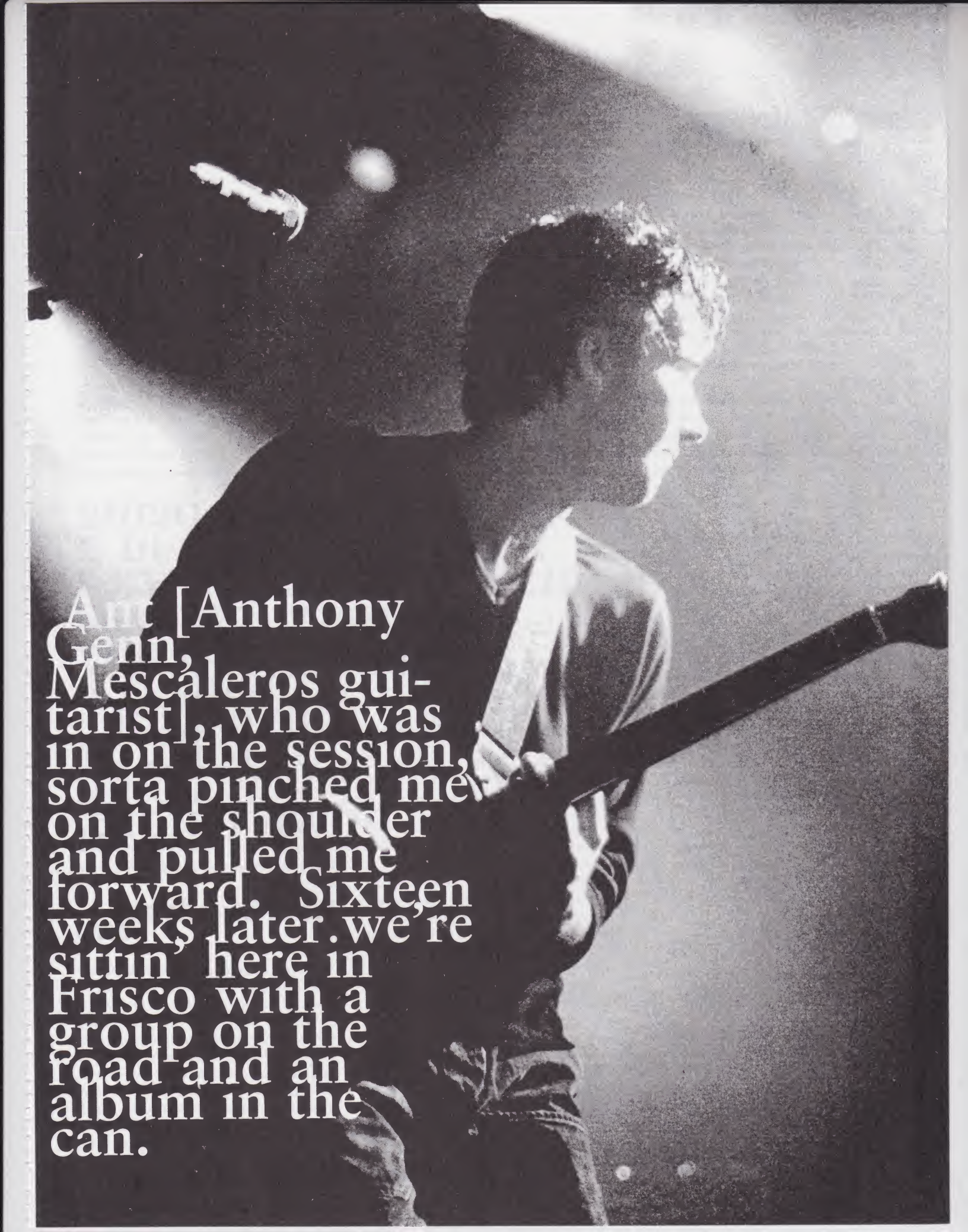
"No, thirty thousand, I believe. And Biafra said 'Well, it's not enough money to completely destroy our reputation.'"

"I agree with Biafra there. But how would it be if it was a million?"

Jeff pipes in (with his notorious Biafra-baiting smirk), "It'd be okay if it was a million!"

Joe: "Well now we're getting to the nitty-gritty there, aren't we? Somewhere between thirty grand and a million. They always said that, didn't they? Everybody's got their price. It's gotta be true. But what about Fugazi?"

Me: "I wonder how much they'd have to pay Ian MacKaye to put a song in a Levi's



Ant [Anthony Genn, Mescaleros guitarist], who was in on the session, sorta pinched me on the shoulder and pulled me forward. Sixteen weeks later, we're sittin' here in Frisco with a group on the road and an album in the can.

commercial?"

Joe: "Fifty million." [uproarious laughter all around]

Youth of Today (And a Couple Yesterdays Ago)

Flipping the proverbial coin, I ask Joe for his thoughts on Rage Against the Machine - a band that shares the Clash's old label, Epic, and like the Clash once did, offers support and publicity to sometimes questionable paramilitary and political groups. He replies, "I saw them at the Fuji Rock Festival in '97, and they *rocked* the house...or the field...or the ski resort or whatever it was. They were *fantastic*. Before, I didn't know too much about 'em, but I respected them when I saw them do that."

Jeff has a theory that he'd been curious to bounce off of Joe - "I was curious in retrospect, on how you feel about the whole effort to bring politics into rock 'n' roll. It's a complicated question, obviously, but you can sort of view it on different levels. On the one hand, you can say that the music itself is really visceral and powerful and taps into the emotional alienation of the audience and it doesn't really matter what the lyrics are. On the other hand, certain kinds of lyrics, if they're insightful and intelligent, can sort of expand peoples' consciousness. On the third hand, if you get to the point where you're just shouting out slogans which are kind of simplistic, in a way, maybe it has a counter-productive effect. People just sort of adopt a kind of simpleminded point of view."

Joe: "Dig it, dig it, yeah. 'Cuz remember, what we're into is music - never mind the baggy trousers. When we cross that line into shouting slogans, no one's gonna listen to you anyway. Somewhere, something's going on with this - and I don't know what it is; it's a poetic thing, you know."

Jeff: "Sometimes, when you begin to adopt kind of simplistic slogans, you're setting yourself up for a fall, because fifteen years later, somebody's going to say, 'Well, he proclaimed this, but he didn't really live up to his own statement.'"

Joe: "True. 'Hope I die before I get old.'"

Jeff: "Or, 'Nineteen and Mad. I won't reach twenty but I don't want to.'"

Joe: "And how old are they now?"

Jeff: "Probably forty-five" [laughter all around]

Joe: "This is the good part of youth - we can't curtail stupidity. It's part of our make-up. Because without stupidity, we'd never assault the wall; I've run blindly at many a brick wall, and if I had any intelligence, I wouldn't've done it. And if I hadn't've done it the people wouldn't've come with me. People feel

for you when you do that. You run blindly at a brick wall, and people go 'Yeahhhh!'

"This shit happened to me last week: We were playing a giant festival in Britain. And in the years gone by, it was never televised, but now it's televised, 'cuz the whole world's gone fucked, y'know? Anyway, I'm singing to the crowd and this huge hydraulic arm sweeps in. It sweeps in with a little seat with a guy with a camera on it. I had a really serious mic stand - it just so happened that it was one of the old-school ones with a *heavy* base. So I flipped right out - completely lost my mind, right? In front of twenty-thousand people. I didn't know what I was doing. So I grabbed the mic stand, and rushed at the nearest BBC television camera and began smashing it. Then I ran across to the other side of the stage and began to smash the other one. And *then* I saw the hydraulic arm and began to smash at it. *Hopeless blows against the Empire!*

"But what I was trying to say was, 'They are trying to film me singing to you, but in

plified that people may take at face value, even though your own thought processes may be more complicated. People may only understand it at a very simplistic level, then later on, they'll misinterpret it or actually distort or even divert what you're saying."

Joe: "When you're a writer, that is a *worry*. I mean, you know what you're thinking and you write it on a bit of paper and to you it's as clear as a bell. But I've learned to double-check. You assume people know what you're talking about - which is a ridiculous assumption."

Me: "A song like 'White Riot' which is about the Notting Hill riots [1976's clash between the police and black participants in the Notting Hill festival], has become somewhat of a skinhead anthem."

Joe: "Good point. I still get requests from weird films going 'Can we use this?' I always hammer that point home - black people know how to deal with their gripes; they go out and smash the joint up. And I always make sure that people are with that and not

"The essence of being a punk is being in a state of concern with humanity, because punk, as with any decent movement, is a protest movement - like jazz, or folk, or whatever was going down before."

the act of them filming me, I can't sing to you because they're getting in the way!" And I wanna say 'It's phony!' That's why I flipped. I've had to write letters of apology to the BBC cameramen. I mean, I was coming at them with this very big piece of machine-tooled iron and I was out of my mind!

"Although I ain't proud of the fact I flipped out, this is part of the stupidity we need. Somebody has to stand up and say 'This is phony!' Y'know? Like, 'Get the cameras out of here!'

Jeff: "On one level, you can make a gesture - like a protest against the nature of life itself, or the system, or whatever. But it's a different thing when you begin to promote certain kinds of lyrical constructs that may be sim-

like, 'Hey, let's have *white riot* and kill everyone.'

We're Not a Garage Band

Despite the renewed interest in his former band (and a live album which should be in stores by the time this issue of *Hit List* goes on sale), Joe isn't simply resting on his Clash City Residency to get him through. He's got a new band, the Mescaleros, comprised of various scene musicians (*not* session men, Joe is quick to point out), and has worked on a variety of projects (including the soundtrack for John Cusack's *Grosse Pointe Blank*) and collaborations with techno artist

Richard Norris (Joe is an avid fan of electronic music). As for his band, he says in the September 1999 issue of *Uncut* magazine, "We ain't playing no teenage rockabilly, we're playing for real. The Mescaleros aren't a bunch of vegetable chewing pussies."

Dietary considerations aside, what Strummer hopes to accomplish with this new group is...swing. "We're tryin' to swing it. A guy came up to me in Chicago - we blew the roof off Chicago the night before last - a guy came up to me and said, 'I've seen any number of Clash gigs, but I've never heard it swing before.' That's all we're tryin' to do. This time out - I didn't really achieve it tonight; we had a hard day out there tonight, I'm telling you - we're trying to swing the music."

"Everybody's gotta go out and buy this book called *Really the Blues* by Mez Mezzrow to find out what they were doin' in 1927; we're doin' the same thing now."

"In England, we've got this ludicrous band called Fat Les; some of my mates run it, and I got conned in to playing some rhythm guitar on one of their records - which don't bear thinking about. They're really incredible. Ant [Anthony Genn, Mescaleros guitarist], who was in on the session, sorta pinched me on the shoulder and pulled me forward. Sixteen weeks later we're sittin' here in Frisco with a group on the road and an album in the can."

Besides their hasty assemblage, the other remarkable thing about the Mescaleros is that the rest of the band look to be at least twenty years younger than the 47-year old Strummer. "They're all guys," says Joe, "that Ant knew from the London session scene - guys playing together, trying to get things going, writing songs for people. And I was doing the same thing. I met Pablo Cook, the percussion guy, and we just sort of ended up with the best players on the scene. Those guys on the stage tonight are the *best* players, but they're also long-gone cats. We could never have done this with so-called "session men." You can see them a mile off, can't you? You can check it, can't you, right off the bat. We lucked into it, 'cause we knew that pool of players, and we knew how great they were. I'd been on the road with Slattery with Black Grape, just gigging them around when they were playing down here in California a couple years ago - we went down to Tijuana and stuff. He was playing Hammond and sax. Thankfully, he's learned the guitar since then. [laughter]"

Me: "Oh, I hate those people! I had a friend in high school who was a brilliant drummer. One day, he picked up my bass and just started ripping - never played before - I'd been playing for a year and he was better than me. I was like 'Dude!'"

Lemme tell ya 'bout Pete.

Pete is one of Joe's friends that were hanging out during the course of the interview. After Mick and Joe finished recording the vocal tracks at SF's Automatt Studios for *Give 'Em Enough Rope* Joe, Pete, and another friend hopped in a '69 Chevy with a belt tied around the hood (to keep it from flapping open at speed) and took the long road to D.C., through New Orleans. Strummer says: "I insist you print every word of Pete's rant. Have you got a magazine or ain't ya? Never mind that I'm in some crap group that played the Fillmore - this is a discussion about everything. This is a discussion that knows no boundaries, as any good wide-ranging discussion should. I want you to put Pete's rant in there, because he connected with me very early in London. In early '78, I was playing a rehearsal before a tour and he kind of appeared. He just chilled into that place and I saw him and said "Come on then." I just caught him by the eye. I was living in some fairly rough pitch-up and he just moved in. He was sleepin' on a table. And you can tell by what he said on the tape tonight that he ain't shittin' around, yeah?"

So here it is, in all its stream-of-consciousness glory, Pete's Rant:

You know what happened was that it was just a tribal thing. You know? 'Cause I'm from the area, too - my aunt lived in the Haight-Ashbury. My dad's a Vietnam vet, he goes crazy; we're practically on welfare. We had no future. We had nothing. We had nothing. A lot of the people in the scene, they made a lot of money - in other things. I know nothing lasts, but what was funny - and what they don't understand is, Joe - and I'm not trying to embarrass him - he was dreaming the songs. So I knew what was actually going to go on. And I thought, "Wow...this is not contrived." 'Cuz we didn't have nothing. Nobody, nobody, nobody to talk to. Nobody to play to. Nothin'. And then the hippies called



us faggots. What was so neat about [the '70's SF/London punk scenes] was that it was real. Like, it wasn't contrived - I say "Fuck you!" 'cuz I wasn't into that [rock 'n' roll] shit. I was into soul. But they spoke more to me, because it was real - it was a connecting thing. I mean, I just wanted to be a migrant worker, 'cuz the society was so fucked. And what Joe was saying at the time - and I had my bullshit detector on 'cuz I'm from the ghetto - it wasn't contrived. That's what I liked about it. Joe would let anybody in with no money. I mean, I remember [to Joe] you were getting in trouble all the time 'cuz you were letting everybody in free! Could you imagine that? They don't do that shit anymore! And the scene in London...maaaan... I mean, I know you guys will dream or write; but it's funny how beautiful it was for a short time. It was like Haight-Ashbury, and I know there was a lot of crap, but for a short period of time, it was nirvana.

Everything that was going on - like with any oppressed group - it was to our benefit, and we didn't know about it. For a poor kid like me, it was against me. And then when I was with the white intellectuals, I mean... "Fuck you I'm not tryin' to hate the White Guy," but we didn't have nothin' - no future. Nothing.

I felt it in my guts, that they weren't fakin' it. Like we feel it today. This was a social thing. Like how the blacks sing all night. Music was more. We didn't have no other outlet. The music was it. I hope you would experience it sometime, 'cuz it was our only food. A lot of people would've rather gotten rid of their eyes than their ears, 'cuz we were hearing Mama. We were hearing a family.

Joe: "It's *terrible* isn't it? We were driving down the motorway. Someone said, 'Why don't we drill a hole in the windshield of the coach?' I said, 'No, let's drill *seven* holes and have Slat play it!' He's one of those dudes. Sickening, ain't it?"

Dirty(?) Punk

Joe: "The essence of being a punk is being in a state of concern with humanity, because punk, as with any decent movement, is a protest movement - like jazz, or folk, or whatever was going down before. They're protest movements against the way the die is cast. You wouldn't bother to do that without being concerned with basic questions of truth or humanity, or trying to get at 'What the fuck is all this about?' 'Why are we alive?' 'Is it only to be wage slaves?' It's a central slam, full-on, like the Beats. Punk's only following the Beats, and whoever else is in there - the Beats, and Hippies, and the Jazzers, and the Smokers, and the Free Thinkers, and the Bohemians - they're centrally slamming on to the main deal, which is 'Are we being born to be wage slaves?' Or not? And if not, then what? There's a great sample going 'round on techno records for the last ten years - I wanna find out where it comes from. It's some excitable American guy; sounds like it comes from a film. And he's *really* excitable and he's making a speech, but he runs outta juice and says, 'We wanna be free! We wanna be free to...to do...uhh...well, We wanna be *free!*' And I'm with him all the way, y'know? He runs into the point of 'To do what?' and like, drives right up on it. I'm gonna chase that thing down, 'cuz it sounds like Richard Benjamin to me. Richard Benjamin *rocks!* Don't no one say nothin' about Richard Benjamin in my presence. You can slag all the guitarists in the world, but *don't* slag Richard Benjamin."

Jeff: "On one hand, I agree with you, that being a punk means going against the grain and trying to be free, but on the other hand, in your initial formulation you were saying that it was being concerned with humanity. So then the question would be, does that mean that Mother Theresa's a punk, too?"

Joe: "Definitely she's a punk! *And* she's a hustler! Let it be said, that bird's a hustler. She's world famous, and you can't get world famous without being part hustler."

Burning Down the Suburbs

One of the bigger insults to the Clash legacy was released earlier this year on Epic. Called *Burning London: The Clash Tribute*, it lumped together many of today's most for-



"My thoughts are far more extreme these days. I thought that maturity might bring an onset of common sense, but luckily, it hasn't."

gettable artists (Third Eye Blind, 311, No Doubt, Silverchair) doing an incredibly great job ruining some of Strummer and Jones's greatest tracks. It had been publicized that Joe was involved with putting together the

record. Thankfully, he set the record straight, assuring us that his involvement in the project was minimal.

Me: "Listening to the Clash tribute record, so much of that [passion, rebellion and concern for humanity] was missing from the songs. I'm a fan of Rancid's, but I thought their song on the tribute record, ['Cheat', from the U.K. version of *The Clash*, available in the U.S. on the *Clash on Broadway* box set] lacked. I thought they paid better tribute to the Clash on their last album than they did by covering the Clash."

Joe: "Well, sometimes you record on a Tuesday afternoon." [laughter]

Me: "But there're bands on there like Third Eye Blind that seem so anti-theatrical to me to what the Clash were doing and the Clash were reaching for, and I think that's what personally disappointed me about that record. I'm curious to know your thoughts on it, since you were somewhat involved in it, weren't you?"

Joe: "No, I wasn't. They try to pretend I was, but I wasn't - but I really like Cracker."

Me: "I liked the Cracker song, too. [A country hoe-down version of 'White Riot' that somewhat harkens back to Cracker leader David Lowery's heyday with 80's underground faves Camper Van Beethoven.]

Brett: "Or what were they doing with that Ice-T song on there?"

Me: "Man, that bummed me out, I gotta say, they turned ['Should I Stay or Should I Go'] into a total misogynist gangsta bitch-slap-fest. The rest of the the record I can kinda listen to and be like, 'whatever' about, but that song, I can't even listen to."

Joe: "However, I do think they were doing it without being too ridiculous about it. They were doing it with irony - like that phrase, 'tongue in their cheek'? To me, at the end of that track, a guy shouts out- and it's so funny that it can't be serious - 'Yo! Let's get the bitches and get outta here!' as it's fading out."

"And that's so ridiculous that I thought, someone said to them, 'Yo! Look, here's twenty thousand dollars in cash an envelope,' I dunno - Epic put this thing out - 'Get in there and rap over this shit.' And they were

like, 'See you in ten minutes! Stay in there in the lobby with the envelope.' I mean, what does Epic expect? What do they want? Mahler's 7th Symphony? You know? You don't give people twenty thousand dollars in

envelopes unless you're fuckin' insane!

Jeff: "Wait a second - You said Ice-T..."

Me: "...It was Ice Cube..."

Jeff: "Exactly, 'cuz Ice-T is a smart guy and Ice Cube's a moron. So if Ice-T said something, it was probably with a sense of irony, whereas if Ice Cube said it then it was probably pretty stupid."

Joe: "Okay...I fold my tent and retire from the field." [laughter]

Me: "Are you taking back the tent you bought for the Specials, too?" [In the 70's, the Clash, feeling sorry for the Specials' poverty, bought the ska group a tent to sleep in while they were on tour, so as to save money on hotels.]

Joe: "I'd like to see the size of that tent! [He begins cracking up at the idea of a tent large enough to hold an entire ska band.] We must be talking fucking French Continental triple-bedroom. We must be talking Deluxe Belgian Camp-Out. I'd like to see that tent and where it is now. I paid for that tent! And where's the tent peg? And the pole that goes across the middle? If that gets lost, then everything's fucked!"

For All the Young Punks (New Boots and Contracts Optional)

Not to say that Joe Strummer is a has-been, although he has been many things - folkie, punk lightning rod, reggae ranter, actor, and film scorer to name but a few - he accomplished so much in such a small amount of time, and the world has moved so far so fast since the Clash first bashed through numbers like "1-2 Crush On You" and jammed out Lee Perry and Junior Murvin's "Police and Thieves" - and even since their collaboration with the late Allen Ginsberg on *Combat Rock*'s "Ghetto Defendant", one has to wonder if the man's most important work hasn't been done; that no matter how far he runs, that legacy will forever outrace him. Strummer seems comfortable with that. He's playing Clash numbers live now not just because people want to hear them, but they're truly great songs that *still* need to be heard. And who better to sing them than the man who battered them out originally? When Jeff asked Strummer initially what he felt his former band's legacy was, Joe replied succinctly, "It's gotta be hair grease." On a more serious note, he continued, "We tried to be with the people, you know? I think our most important legacy was the way we moved among the people. Meeting the people, talking to the people, not having a giant ego. Cutting the star shit down. Realizing that you're a cowboy on the stage, but offstage you're just a rancher. I think our most important legacy was that we were *real* with it. We didn't allow anyone to

start swannin' around inside some egotistical nightmare. Well...when we *could* stop that."

"The drift was that I thought we talked to the people all the time, let anybody into the backstage who cared to wait; just made it all available. It was never like some elite jet-set squadron hiding in a room. And that's what I would like to leave to all the groups that follow us into the future: Get real, get with the people, and just don't get on a trip that you're great. 'Cause you *ain't* great, and I've got a thousand records in my house that *prove* you ain't great."

Jeff: "In retrospect, is there anything that you would change about things you said, or actions that you took that you now look back on with some degree of regret?"

Joe: "That question's a joke, right?"

Jeff: "No, I mean, it's a big question."

Joe: "You gotta take the salt with the pepper. I mean, there's probably a thousand things I could talk about all night - every stupid thing I ever said or did. All in all, I'll tell you, you gotta allow the past to be. The

Me: "But beyond that...I always felt this, and maybe it's my own construction, looking back on this legacy - I was seven years old when 'Rock the Casbah' came out if that gives you any idea of my age, and obviously I never saw the Clash - for me there's a sense of a moral center and a sense of passion for a sort of rightness. And a youthful charge for that. Getting older and having a family, and being a family man, how much of that has changed for you? I mean, obviously you're not hitting people in the heads with guitars anymore..."

Joe: "Well..."

Joe and Jeff in chorus: "Just smashing them with mic stands!" [laughter]

Joe: "Having said that, I went further out than I've ever gone in my life last week - seven days ago. Also, my thoughts are far more extreme these days. I thought that maturity might bring an onset of common sense, but luckily, it hasn't. I'm far more extreme now than I ever was - I think we should smash the whole world up and start

"That's what I would like to leave to all the groups that follow [The Clash] into the future: Get real, get with the people, and just don't get on a trip that you're great."

words I most often say are 'You fool.' I say that day and night, even now. 'You fool.' Waking up thinking about some stupid thing I said or did."

Jeff: "We all go through that."

Joe: "We all go through that, right? Well I'm no different. But I'm still doing it. I've amended it to put 'crazy' in there. So now I say, 'You crazy fool.' It's more alleviating, you know? I've decided to stop cutting myself such a hard ration of bacon."

Me: "I remember reading an interview with you from about ten years ago where somebody was talking about the legacy of the Clash and you said, 'Oh, we were just a bunch of drug-addict musicians.'"

Joe: "Yeah, absolutely!"

Me: "And even if you were..."

Joe: "We are! We were! We smoked pot *all* the time."

Me: "But even..."

Joe: "All the time..."

all over again, y'know? I think we should burn every building that was ever built to the ground, plow it into the turf and just live like Comanches. I wanna wander over endless greens."

Me: "Which reminds me of maybe the most important line you ever sang - to me at least - 'I wanna liquefy everybody gone dry' way back on 'Clash City Rockers'."

Joe: "Rock on!"

Me: "I was talking to my girlfriend about this the other day - she's a really big Clash fan as well, and we were sitting there talking about [that song], and I said 'That line just sums up everything art should do.'"

Joe: "Yeah, yeah...let's liquefy everybody gone dry. Because everybody has gone dry. And that's why, I suppose, we exist to play up on this wooden thing there - because we're tryin' to liquefy people. Thanks for remindin' me of that. ⊕



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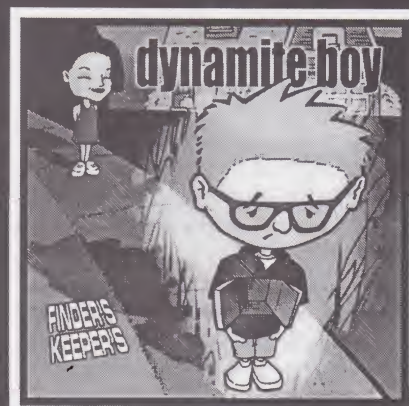
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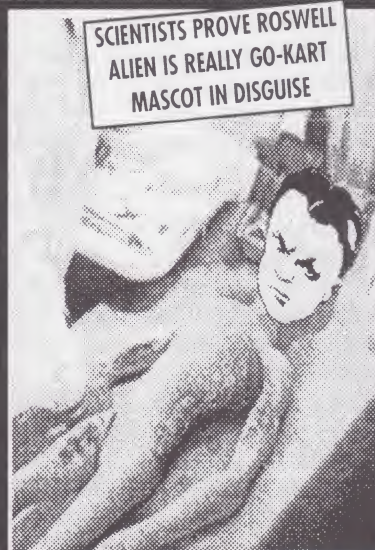
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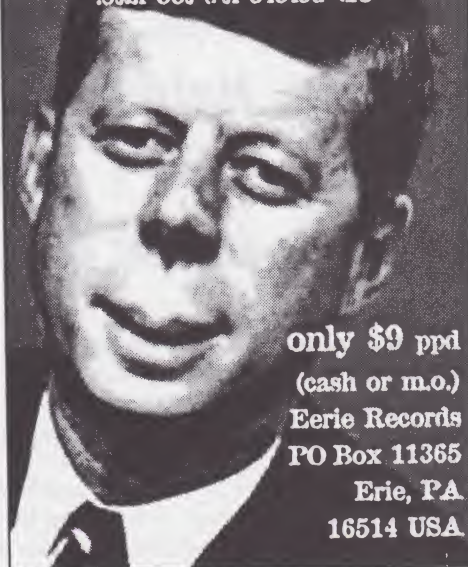
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Deadline creeps up again, so I'll take the easy way out and do what every two-bit hack rock writer will be doing in the next few months, recapping the BEST OF THE 90'S. But I'm doing it early and, besides, my list is just so much fucking COOLER than those losers', anyway. Not even that predictable, for those of you who think you have my musical tastes pegged. There are certainly some selections that might surprise you. Truth be told, I kind of had an idea to do this type of column for awhile. I've always liked making lists of music, back to when I was a little kid, and I'd act like some quasi-Kasey Casem and play a countdown of my personal top tens each week in the privacy of my bedroom. As I've

probably mentioned before, my adolescence was quite pathetic. No wonder I got into punk rock!

I've divided this list up into two portions—best albums and best songs. The albums are successful as a

complete body of work, something I can listen to all the way through and have my butt kicked by almost every track. But there are also individual songs—tucked onto an album that might be OK or even excellent, but not having quite enough to make the best albums list. I consider these more-or-less lost musical gems. And, yes, 7"s are neglected somewhat because to compile a list of that sort would be an endless task and I'm not up to it. But that's not to give short-shrift to that medium... sure, there are way too fucking many mediocre 7" releases (just as there are way too many truly lousy CD releases, as the cost of manufacturing them as come down over the years) but digging a bit often yields some pearls amongst the shit.

My selections would have admittedly been a lot different if I was still into the music I was listening to at the onset of this decade. That's when I was in my heavy rock phase, brought on by the so-called Seattle explosion. Yep, I was suckered in like a lot of people. And, yes, it's a little embarrassing, although I still think Nirvana definitely had their moments and wrote some killer songs. Probably not enough to put "Nevermind" on my list, but it got some consideration. I also pledged fierce devotion to such bands as Helmet and Soundgarden, who I can barely stand to listen to anymore. Nor can I listen to much of the pop/punk that was breaking big in the middle part of the decade. Some people's musical tastes evolve... except for discovering the wonders of free-jazz over the past few years, mine have "devolved," in a way, back to the raw, fast, aggressive basics. And back to the roots, a lot of the hard/heavy sounds that I grew up listening to, as past columns in this fine pub-

lication have revealed. So fuck mainstream, accessible punk; fuck that lame, watered-down emo whining (the type of emo that's divorced from anything resembling hardcore); fuck all that testosterone, tough-guy, rap-metal crap; fuck the metal bands dragging the word hardcore through the mud... I'm weeding out the shit, not dealing with it anymore and getting back to what I love—loud, attitudinal music with an edge and not devised by some fucking marketing plan. For the most part, anyway...

So don't look at this list as anything definitive, but as the result of a day spent going through my collection, sneaking a peak at past "Best Of" lists for various years (and cringing at some past choices) and, as has always been my mission, perhaps making you want to check out some of these recordings. That's the point, right? To turn people on to music that blows me away. Also, these lists aren't in any order of preference, but alphabetical...

BEST ALBUMS:

ARCWELDER-Pull (Touch & Go, 1993)

There's something about this band where the sum is greater than its parts. From Minneapolis, and they had the power quotient, but it's tempered with a melodic versatility. New wavish dance patterns, chiming guitar lines and a good mix of two distinct vocalists. "Will When You Won't," the centerpiece, is hypnotic and numbing in the best possible way, with floating vocals, an irresistible drone and strong drumwork. Rhythmic, dynamic and often quite beautiful. A mantra with a beat? Maybe, and there aren't many bands with a sound like this. "Xerxes," the followup album in 1994, was almost as good.

AUS-ROTTEN-The System Works For Them (Tribal War, 1995)

Yes, the crusty/anarcho types love 'em but so do I. And their points about corporate abuses, various societal ills and prejudices are cogently stated. Blunt messages that pull no punches, performed with roaring, roiling aggressiveness and some ruling singalong lines: "ATF,

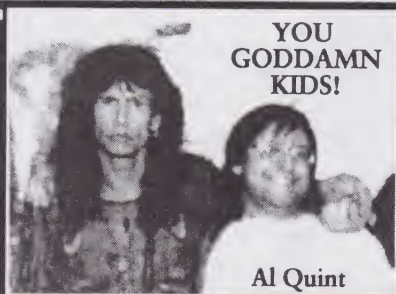
ATF, we don't need the ATF..." More power than the firebombs the real ATF used at Waco.

AVAIL-Dixie (Lookout, 1994)

Closest to capturing their live presence, with a collection of impassioned, powerful songs. Even making a song about AIDS ("Virus") sound like a celebration, with a "hey-hey-hey" chorus. Invigorating, liberating sounds by this Richmond, VA band. Just watch out for those backpacks.

CONSERVATIVES-This Album Is A Sovereign Nation (Sonic Swirl, 1998)

Don't know nothin' about this band, except they're from Ohio and put out a killer album in '98 that deserves to be on this list. An older punk style, rooted in the thorny late 70s midwest sounds, given a dose of adrenalin and hintings of melody, such as on "Los Alamos Lab Technician" and "Girlfriend." Malevolent and sneering throughout, which makes it classic punk rock in my book.



I also pledged fierce devotion to such bands as Helmet and Soundgarden, who I can barely stand to listen to anymore.

DIDJITS-Hornet Piñata (Touch & Go, 1990)

Another hell-raising punk rock 'n roll band who had an impeccable, innate sense of history and brought it up to date as if they were on an amphetamine bender. With his circular-lens dark glasses and interesting selections in stage couture, guitarist/vocalist Rick Sims was born to rock, jabbing out the catchy chords and singing the words with a unique helium yelp. This album is their masterwork, one catchy, piledriving zinger after another. Pure surge and adrenaline, although equally effective when they slow it down, as on "Evel Knievel" or "Captain Ahab." Underrated as all hell—I saw these guys play mind-blowing sets to smallish audiences in Boston and Cambridge way too often—although Rick caught a nice break when the Offspring covered "Killboy Powerhead" on that album of theirs that sold a gazillion copies. Rick later plied his wares briefly with the Supersuckers, before starting another rockin' unit, Gaza Strippers, who continue in a somewhat similar tradition, although not quite up to this level.

DILLINGER FOUR-Midwestern Songs Of The Americas (Hopeless, 1998)

By far the best album of the last few years. They do the poppy/punk sound the right way, with a full-bodied grittiness. Monstrous bass-lines ram the hooks home, the guitars buzz mightily and the band boasts two main vocalists, each with their own style—Patrick's gruffer emanations and Billy's sweeter timbre. Songs you absolutely can't get out of your head—I've woken up at 4 AM humming "Doublewhiskeycokeonice." The song titles are brilliant—"Mosh For Jesus," "Portrait Of The Artist As A Fucking Asshole," "It's A Fine Line Between The Monkey and The Robot" and the lyrics definitely have a strong, socially-conscious message, but do so without cliché or overt sloganeering. Making a point, but doing so while completely rocking out and pinning you to the wall with their tuneful might.

FUEL-Fuel (Sixth International, 1990)

Emotional hardcore wasn't always a dirty word and worked quite well in this Bay Area band's hands. Hoarse vocals packed with urgency and a blend of drive and strong melody. One friend told me these guys were derisively referred to as "Fuelgazi" on a radio station in their hometown and that might be true ("Some Gods" certainly comes from that muse), but Fuel came from a harder/faster direction and put out a burning album and some solid 7" tracks (and a CD on Allied collects the album and 7"s) before their implosion.

HELLACOPTERS-Supershitty To The Max (White Jazz, 1996/Man's Ruin, 1998)

Believe the hype: this Swedish band know how to rock. A hard-driving, explosive tandem of punk and garage mania, along with some deliriously-wacked hard rock moves, as well as some speedy scorch. Whew! All the Iggy & the Stooges comparisons are certainly valid, but the early work of fellow Swedes Union Carbide Productions (themselves Iggy disciples) also comes to mind. Rough and raucous and kicking ass all the way.

ALQUINT

JESUS LIZARD-Goat (Touch & Go, 1991) and Liar (Touch & Go, 1992)

Another long-time live favorite. David Yow certainly put on a show. A toss-up as to which is the better album, but they both had songs with immense staying power. A huge rock sound, with bashing drums, relentless bass-lines and nightmarish guitar alternating between slash and creepier note plucking. An unholy merger of Zeppelin and the Birthday Party with a punk rock influx. "Gladiator," "Boilermaker," "Puss," "Mouth Breather," "Seasick" (their long-time opening song), "Nub" (with vicious slide guitar)... these are all formidable displays of volume and skill. A band born during that heavy rock phase alluded to earlier that still make the walls shake.

LEATHERFACE-Mush (Roughneck UK, 1991/Seed, 1992)

No one has a voice like Frankie N.W. Stubbs. OK, maybe Lemmy, who Stubbs is often compared with and it's not completely off the mark. A nicotine-stained, well-worn rasp and he attempts a sweetly crooning style with those weathered tonsils. It's certainly unique-sounding and quite endearing. Equally-endearing is Leatherface's rough tunefulness and "Mush" is one of the best mergers of pop hooks and punk drive of this decade. Everything came together perfectly for this album. Incredibly catchy, memorable songs with intelligent, but non-obvious lyrics, delivered with a balance of passion, poise and fury. Not watered-down, happy-go-lucky crap. There's substance, depth and strength in these songs and it's only gotten better with age. Released on an awful faux indy label in the US, Seed Records, and not even in print in this country at the moment. That's a crime and one that should be rectified as soon as possible.

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HIT SQUAD

NEW BOMB TURKS--!!Destroy-Oh-Boy!! (Crypt, 1992) and **Information Highway Revisited** (Crypt, 1994)

Say what you will about MRR, but that publication did expose me to this band. I figured if the late Tim Yo said "Destroy" was the "best album of the last 5 years," it must at least be pretty good. Well, the 'ol coot was onto something, here. The Turks assimilate the rowdy, up-to-no-good rock 'n roll sounds of four decades into one smoking package—from the hell-raising of Jerry Lee and Little Richard to 60s garage miscreants to the best of punk. Jim Weber's fuzz-busting guitar sound blazes mercilessly and drummer Bill Randt is the secret weapon, with his sheer force and skillful fills. All that with smart-assed, intelligent lyrics delivered with sarcastic, soulful cool by Eric Davidson. Once again, a tossup as to which of these albums is the better one—just get both of them. When I hear the opening chords to "Born Toulouse-Lautrec" or "Sinking Feeling," something goes off and it's impossible to sit still. They've also consistently been one of the best live bands out there.

THE PIST-Ideas Are Bulletproof (Elevator, 1995)

No bullshit punk from Connecticut, played in workmanlike, energetic fashion. Al barks out the vocals with venom and the songs fuse UK and US punk and thrash influences and they're performed with the heart of the true believer. They were doing this at a time (early to mid-90s) when it wasn't all that fashionable. One of the bands that rekindled my love for the basic punk approach. A purity and, also, an infectious catchiness in their buzz. "The Customer (Is Always Right)"

effectively expresses the feelings of getting treated like crap while working in retail hell: "You rude bastard, don't patronize me/You'll get some respect when you show some to me." I became aware of this band a little late and only managed to see them one time. "We're The Pist," off their "Destroy Society" is a fucking anthem and will be reissued on a disc of out of print/rare Pist material. Rejoice!

PUBLIC ENEMY-Fear Of A Black Planet (Def Jam, 1990)

I don't like most hip-hop these days and PE certainly have had questionable characters within their ranks at one point or another (Professor Griff, anyone?), but this is a great album in any genre. A dense, sonic tapestry with a killer beat. Flowing seamlessly from track to track and with unflagging intensity, particularly on "Brothers Gonna Work It Out" and "Burn Hollywood Burn." Hard stuff.

TALK IS POISON-Talk Is Poison (Prank, 1998)

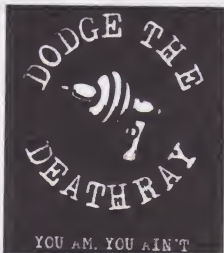
A blast of anger and rage from the Bay Area, influenced by European and older American hardcore. This hit me hard and immediately and continues to rip me a new one whenever I put it on. Blazing with squalls of feedback and jarring powerchords, tooth-rattling bass-lines and pissed-off vocals. A single-minded assault played with force and vigor.

VIOLENT SOCIETY-Not Enjoyin' It (CI, 1995)

Another band that brought me back home to punk rock with their spirited, full-on sound. Agitated vocals, spitfire guitars and played at a mainly healthy clip. Their "Rise Of Punk" EP and "Times Of Distraught" album aren't far behind, either.



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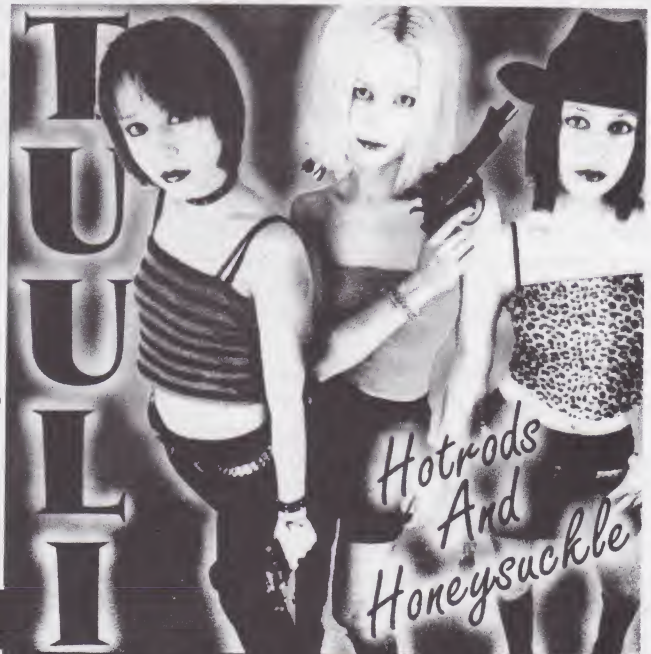
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CRAIN-Foot Sanding (from "Heater," Restless, 1994) Heavy lumbering rock in between Slint and Jesus Lizard. A relentless, mesmerizing track. The album almost made my list, too. Anyone want to sell me a copy of their first album?

DRIVE LIKE JEHU-Sinews (from "Yank Crime," Interscope, 1994) The slow build-up and payoff and the impact is hypnotic over the course of its 9+ minutes. Sick guitar interplay and a forceful main riff line that embeds itself into your consciousness.

GARDEN VARIETY-Pretty Mouth (from "Garden Variety," Gern Blandsten, 1993) Giving emo a good name with a surging, infectious attack. Bawlin' and bawlin' and coming to a stunning conclusion.

GAUNT-Pollution (from "Fielder's Choice" 7", Datapanik, 1992) and **Rich Kid** (from "I Can Smell Your Mom From Here," Thrill Jockey, 1995) Amazingly catchy punk rock from Ohio. "Pollution" is done lo-fi and sounds like a lost '77-era classic. The other song is best-known for its chorus "Whooh... FUCK THE RICH KIDS!!" Try to resist singing along. Can't be done. Jerry Wick is a great songwriter. Avoid their major label album, though.

GUS-Outta My Head (from "The Progressive Science Of Breeding Idiots For A Dumber Society," Wrong, 1995) A piledriving punk song with a mind-blowing chorus, hidden on an otherwise unexceptional album (well, except for its title). It happens.

GUZZARD-Supersonic Enemy Of Evil (from "Quick, Fast, In A Hurry," AmRep, 1995) and **Last** (from "Get A Witness," AmRep, 1993) Economical, hot 'n heavy punk sounding as though the contents are under intense pressure and about to explode. Then there are the unexpected twists. Each song has a catchy chorus hook and, also, sucker-punch riff-lines on the bridge. They also both *move* like a mothefucker.

HAMMERHEAD-Earth (I Won't Miss) (from "Duh, The Big City, AmRep, 1996) The first song on this above-average album, introduced with almost a minute of otherworldly sonic mayhem before a bass-line with the thickness of a telephone pole proceeds to assault without mercy. Riding that crest for five minutes. The piano towards the end is a nice touch. Meant to played at ear-shredding volume.

HELMET-Bad Moon (from "Strap It On," AmRep, 1990) Here's one song I can still listen to by them. Loud and murderous chug-rock before it became monotonous.

J CHURCH-Waiting On The Ground (from "Arbor Vitae," Honey Bear, mid-90s) The perfect 86 second pop gem. Hooks coming from everywhere—in the vocals, harmonies, guitar lines, and it still has a huge chip on the shoulder. Its charms are inescapable. J Church are prolif-

ALQUINT

ic as all hell, but this is the song I keep going back to. At least once a week.

NINE SHOCKS TERROR-Prozac Logic (from "15th Anniversary Compilation," Suburban Voice, 1997) Pulverizing hardcore with psychotic vocals and brain-frying guitar and bass-lines, driven at warp speed.

ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT-Sturdy Wrists (from "Circa: Now," Interscope, 1992) Two minutes of sonic joy, with a wonderous mesh of fired-up guitar, sax and Speedo's engaging vocal. My favorite Rocket song.

SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN-Fuck You Norway (from "All The Presidents' Heads," Tario 7", 1994) An engaging ditty that gives Showcase's vociferous audience an opportunity to sing "fuck you" ad infinitum at the top of their lungs. Why Norway? Who knows... but "Fuck You Norway" is this Boston punk band's showstopper. Recorded for their new album, but I still like the original best. Happy hunting.

SLINT-Good Morning Captain (from "Spiderland," Touch & Go, 1991) I rediscovered this great song on the "Kids" soundtrack and it's the haunting conclusion of Slint's second album. Subtle and supple, with

a pulsating drum pattern moving things along under guitar lines that flow from brittle to glowingly haunting, along with a quizzical narrative about an injured sea captain who might have some distasteful baggage. Erupting into a climactic powerjolt with vocalist Brian McMahon going from tentative enunciation into howling emotionalism. Rumor has it he puked his guts out after recording the vocal. An unforgettable piece.

STEREOLAB-Crest (from "Transient Random-Noise Bursts With

Accompaniment," Elektra, 1992) Yes, this punk rocker loves some Stereolab, particularly their mantra-like, Velvets-inspired drone. One lyrical line repeated ad infinitum while an enrapturing mesh of guitar, harmonies and organ carries you along.

UNSANE-Vandal-X (from a Sub-Pop 7", 1991) This NYC noise trio's shining moment. Bashing drums, a dramatic, cascading riff-line and vocals that sound as though Chris Spencer is screaming from inside a sealed tomb. A shade under two minutes of stunning brutality and living up to the bloody imagery of their record sleeves.

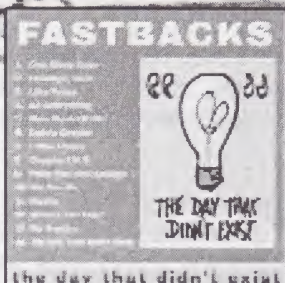
WEDDING PRESENT-Take Me (from "Bizarro," RCA, 1990) The ultimate jangle 'n strum song from the Weddoes, surfing its repetitive arrangement until deliriousness has long since set in. ⊕

Write to me... buy the new issue of *Suburban Voice*. Al Quint/PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903/alellen@shore.net

**["Waiting On The Ground" is]
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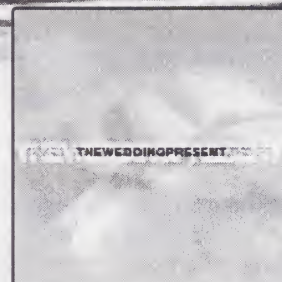
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Well well well, what a treat. Tom Byron's "Lord of Asses" series is indeed, everything it's "crack"-ed up to be. Now that he has forsaken the long-haired metal look he assumed back around the time he got his nips pierced, and has opted for a wig that makes him look more like a generic Social Distortion fan (ca. '82), Tom seems to be solidly back in the saddle. And let me tell ya—it's *some saddle*. This guy sees more brown eye in a week than the Meatman glimpsed on their whole "Rectal Speculum '86" Tour. He gets "a-round," if you know what I mean. The only downer about the film fest we had here this week is that I just realized I may have been jerking off at the very moment that Claude Bessy died. Bummer. If only I'd known, I could have held back and he might have lived forever. Oh well. Now that Claude's already known to be dead, you can watch any volume of "Lord of Asses" without feeling the guilt that's hanging out of my back pocket like a yellow hankie. So go for it.

Of course, they say that nobody lives forever. Which may or may not be true. But records can live almost forever if you don't dick around with them too badly. I mean, my own records get no real special treatment. Sure, they deserve (and get) a decent box, but after that they're on their own. If they fuck up, it's off to the dump for 'em. Unless, that is, I can somehow convince Japanese collectors that the goods were damaged by some notable. "Oh yeah," I might say. "Steve Albini sat on that one in my car on the way home from a Big Black gig." That ploy has "legs," but you can't use it all the time. But, I'm getting "off topic." I promised last time that I'd listen to some of my old records for you and that's what I'll do. The box we'll be sampling today is U14B1.

This code has to do w/ my attempt to keep my records in some semblance of order. If you ever bust into my storage place and are trying to figure out what's where, it goes like this. There are four basic categories of boxes, noted by the first letter on them: U is unplayed or is a potential upgrade copy; W is weed (a category that happened when I once tried—misguidedly—to apply aesthetic order to the collection a few yrs back); S is for my own permanent collection; those w/o a letter in front of the number are duplicates. After the letter comes the numbering. I follow a Dewey-like system. First things get numbered: 14, 15. If I have to split these boxes because there's a lotta shit in them, a letter follows: 14A, 14B. If I have to split these boxes, a letter follows: 14A1, 14A2. And so on. Anyway, here're some reviews from 14B1.

The Nightingales "Urban Ospreys/Cakehole" (UK Cherry Red 56, '83) Easy to have forgotten about this bunch, but jeez—did they ever proffer a beautiful sorta post-Fall hillock of riddle. The slide guitars have the crank of heavy Beefheartian validity, the rhythms slide like well-criscoed fists, and the vocals jabber at the edge of understandability. Nice.

The Nightingales "It's a Cracker/Here We Go Now" (UK Vindaloo UGH-9, '84) Hmm...kind of a new Nicholas Cave influence on the vocals here, so I guess the Birthday Party must've "happened" by this point. Yeah. The gtrs have a more sorta skeeterdelic edge to 'em also, floating near the top of the room rather'n digging into midriff. I guess the difference could be compared to '69 Magic Band vs. '72 Magic Band. Almost sounds like a less publican version of Motor Boys Motor.

Nightman EP (Limp 029, '79) Says 33-1/3, but that's a trick. And a good one, too. Is this related to the Razz or something? I don't recall, but it's an almost-okay-enough slab of



DC roots rock in the vague Slickee Boys tradition that colored so many bands down there. Not as interesting as the Slickees, but a real hole-filler if yr a Limp completist. And hey, these days, who isn't?

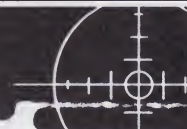
Fred Nihilist "Liberation" +2 (AUS Slam Fest FRED-1 '92) This was Marek's first thing or so, I think. The a-side has a

chuffiness to the gtr playing that makes me feel like the Foghat revival may have happened while I was sleeping, but the female cuss-shouting is better'n virtually anything that anyone ever heard on Don Kirschner's Rock Concert. Even Al Quint. The tracks on the b-side seem more specific in their attention to punk porridge, w/ vocals that verge on Oi territory while the gtr spugs like some late, only vaguely imaginable version of Crass.

Nimrod "Cunttroll" one-sided flexi (JPN Bron '90?) Can't remember a damn thing about these guys. What were they, a round-eye trio in Japan or something? Their names certainly have a round-eye ring to 'em. The tune here is somewhat in the mode of the early Sun City Girls at their most rockist. Unspooling lines of stun gtr and vocals that sound like tree bark pushed through a metal fence.

911 dbl-7" (Infinite 911, '81) Looked at this and thought it was from the midwest, which shows what a fuckin' turd I am. Just

***"Oh yeah," I might say.
"Steve Albini sat on that one
in my car on the way home
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use it all the time.***



because these guys look like Ragnar Kvaran's sidemen doesn't mean that they're not cosmopolitan New Yorkers, because they are. Maybe they were all born there. Who knows? Anyway, the four tunes on these two nearly endless 45s are of a genre that gets called "punk-pop" by guys in the know. There're heavy construction debts to '60s garage rock, but a stinginess of string-stroke that shows these guys really treasured their domestic issue of that eponymous Clash LP. The first track, "Do You Still Want Me?", has the same sort of relatively massive drive that Boston's Boy's Life would a year or two later, plus a very unusual handclap track. The rest is a lot more useless.

The Nips "All the Time in the World/Private Eye" (UK Soho SH-4 '78) Third single or so. Guess they'd just stopped being the Nipple Erectors by this point, eh? Jesus, Shane always had big old teeth didn't he? Curious to note that the cover art is by Phil Smee, who's done so many of the Brit '60s reissues over the past 15 yrs. Anyway, this Nips stuff is fairly decent. The a-side is nice, straight riff-punk w/ Hot Rod depth added by harmonica. The flip's a generic punkabilly shitter that probably sounded pretty good at a club. Drunk. At my desk, sober, its impact is somewhat lessened.

The Nips

"Gabrielle/Vengeance" (UK Chiswick CHIS 119, '79) Sheesh, the a-side's like a jangly Brit version of that later-period Ramones ballad stuff. The b-side's better—a little stodge-punk chopper about beating up some (presumably smaller) guy from Birmingham. The country-punk gtr break is probably supposed to be a cute as corn, but life would've been better w/o it.

The Nirvana Devils "Some Foreign Shore/Pure Fun" (GER Exile 7002 '85) The a-side is foppy German garage revisionism w/ semi-annoying female vocals (in English) designed to give Midnight Record's J.D. Martignon a stiffy so massive that it'd drain all the blood from his body and make him fall to the floor like some sorta slit fish. The b-side sounds like a Naomi Ruth Eisenberg-sung out-take from one of the later Dan Hicks

LPs. Which is surely a first of some sort.

No Direction "Reaganomics/Where's the Beach?" (No Direction 01, '83) Every time that someone tells me that there was no credible punk from South Dakota I will forthwith hand him or her a donut and this record. It looks like it's gonna be 'core, but the sound on the a-side actually owes more to the Burma-descended branching that Husker Du began on *Metal Circus*. The flip sounds like the Nurses trying to play a Rattlers song. Which is still plenty credible. For South Dakota.

No Joe "Hard Wax" EP (Round Raoul 03, '79) This was Mark Hoback's band w/ Don Zientara, begun after that *A Sides* album and the "Farrahclones" single. It's a very good slab of lo-fi DC garage. One of the tracks appeared on :30 *Over DC*, there's a live cover of the Sonics' "Strychnine", and Hoback's take on garage-punk is genuinely weird (including, as it does, the heaviest Roxy

Music influence this side of Cleveland). My favorite of all Hoback's records. What's yrs?

No Thanks "Ready to Die" EP (Dead Space 1999, '83) Hey, the sounds of A7! Can't recall a damn thing about these guys, but they sure manifest the formal speed ethos of the NYHC scene ca. '83. Has a pleasant shoebox recording quality, enough slow/fast dynamism to make Jack Rabid spit joyful sperm-gobs across the room, and the most excellent spelling of the word poseur yet noted. If I were gonna keep a shoebox of NYHC, this'd be in it.

No Trend "Mass Sterilization Caused by Venereal Disease" + 2 (No Trend 10-3, '83?) Although this band is often written off because of the laxness of their later recordings, this is a pretty good slab of echo-scabbed art-core. Seemingly indebted to the early recordings of PiL and Subway Sect, this Zientara production could easily be a Small Wonder 45 from '80 or so. It's got a post-punk DIY strangle-grasp that is not easily shrugged. Who knew? Who fucking knew?

Normil Hawaiians "The Beat Goes On/Ventilation" (UK Dining Out TUX 13, '80) Must be the first single by these Brit DIY oddballs. This is a lot less whacked than their later stuff, but it has an approach to gtr that can only have been lifted from NY's No

Wave bands (Jodie Harris-style slack, instant-decay riffing combined w/ Arto Lindsay's early scrub-splat). This methodology is utilized in producing something far more traditionally wave-like than its origins (indeed the b-side could almost be a Penetration ballad), but the clues are very interesting. Dig that David Lynch coda.

Normil Hawaiians "Still Obedient/Should You Forget?" (UK Illuminated ILL-7 '81) Typical neo-

prog production sound that so many Illuminated records have, combined w/ their earlier squirreliness and an odd, densely-packed feel that one associates w/ the Pop Group and the Mothmen and such. To have this all overlaid w/ the creepy keyboard wash that pops up now and then on this is somewhat disturbing, but it's a lot easier to get down than is the loud proto-goth (like Nightmares in Wax) it resembles. I still remember their 12" stuff as being quite fucked up. Am I hallucinating?

The Nosebleeds "Ain't Been to No Music School/Fascist Pigs" (UK Rabid TOSH-102, '77) Gosh, there he is—Vinnie Reilly before he became the Duritti Column. Nice tie. Shockingly good single, too. Basic sorta '77 Brit punk raving w/ some very extended gtr shit from Mr. Reilly. Didn't Ed Banger's other single suck? If it did, that would mean Vinnie was the Nosebleeds' secret punk weapon, I guess. Wow.

The Not Quite "Green Slime/Circles" (NL Resonance PRO-864501, '86) Garage revisionism from the Nutmeg State. I wonder if these guys ate pizza w/ Wayne Rogers? Probably. Haven't heard their album for a while, but the covers on this 45 have a fucked-up smushed-and-dense-confusion factor that has eluded most other recreators of sixties-ism. Pretty hip.

The Notice "Riverside Drive/Romantic Youth" (Intense 0212, '81) Wow, dude rock. Unsure as to whether their prime allegiance

Guess they'd just stopped being the Nipple Erectors by this point, eh? Jesus, Shane always had big old teeth didn't he?

BYRON COLEY

should be to Edward Van Halen or Bruce Springsteen, these fuckers decide to *just rock*. Let the chips fall where they may. Notsensibles "I Thought You Were Dead" +2 (UK Snotty Snail NELCOL-3, '80) Third or so single by these Brits has an a-side that is one of the most idiotic pieces of sing-along shit ever. Real follow the bouncing ball bologna. The session is saved (for my taste) by the collapsing spuzz of "Teenage Revolution", which rushes along like a very focused Swell Maps. Which is a good thing.

Nova Mob "Cavalry/Madhouse" (Nova Mob 1, '88) This is the Boston Nova Mob, not the Minnesota one. I didn't remember either of them as being very spectacular and this single proves that I'm at least partly right. The a-side here's a fluffy tribute to the Native Son (themselves a tribute to a misinterpretation of Mission of Burma). The flip, which revises Negative Trend's "Meathouse" in ways that would appeal to overweight college students, is a lot more interesting.

The Now "Development Corporations/Why" (UK Ultimate Music ULT-401, '77) Great, stupid '77 UK punk, w/ a very special shoelace gtr sound, lyrics so simple they sound like they were written by babies, and lovely, generic mouth-full-of-teeth vocals. I think these guys had a later single on Raw, then drifted back into the world of carnival amusements. But for this moment, they has the essence of the 1977 exploding inside each of their bodies' cells and this 45, especially the b-side, captures a shard of time perfectly.

Numb Sex "Used" EP (Incas 1552) No clue on this one. If it's Incas, it must be Bridgeport, CT, probably in the early-mid '80s. Beyond that, yr guess is as good as (if not better than) mine.

There are five tracks, all of which have collapsing core rhythms, supported by very belligerently bellowing vocals, and gtr that whips around like a pus-covered electric cable. Typical no-fi Incas sound and crudely opaque cover visuals only add to the allure. A hot one for *Bloodstains Across Connecticut*.

Nun "riv skf/margine" (IT If Product 8401 '84) Electronic art damage by Ezio Albrile. Minor melodic inventions atop straw-crunching sequences. Each side's about 90 minutes, too. This would be a good one to make Bale listen to on headphones for a few days. That'd be sure to improve his disposition in the classroom.

Nux Vomica "My Life to Live/TV Producer" (NZ no label PR-2361 '86) Produced by Little Stevie McCabe (of Axemen fame), this record has the qualities expected from association w/ *that* genius in abundance. I speak, naturally, of extreme lo-fidelity and perverse inarticulation. Somewhere there's a merry-go-round hurdy-gurdy. Somewhere else there's a drunk guy playing fuzz bass and yowling like a New Zealand version of Eric Hysteric. Their meeting is animated.

Well, that's the end of the interesting-looking N's in the box, so let's call it a day. Next time, maybe I'll review some of my favorite shoes. Thanks. And if you feel that you *must* complain, please do it directly to me at P.O. Box 627, Northampton MA 01061. ⊕

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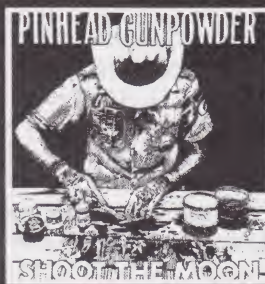
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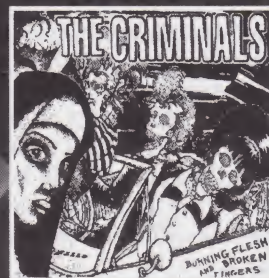
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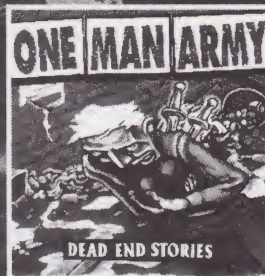
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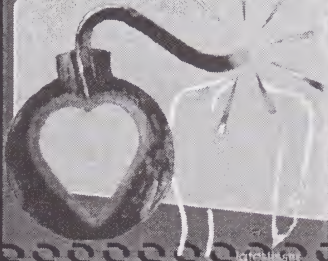
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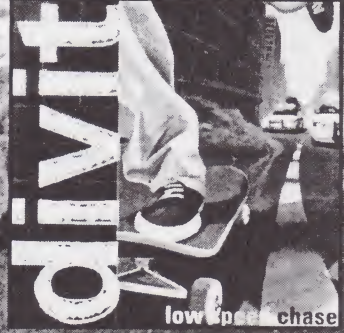


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Old School vs. New School

I'm not sure why I'm even writing about this. It's not like it hasn't been just a touch overdone. But what the hell... I see a lot of complaining about all the bands sounding exactly the same now. And claims that the '70s and '80s were some kind of Golden Age of Punk that is supposed to be worshipped in awe from afar. Uh...isn't that how Christianity got started? Except that unlike Jesus, not all of us are even dead yet. Hell, it seems that half of us are writing for *Hit List*. So, at the risk of ending the worship of our own band...or maybe in the hope of ruining all worship of the Feederz, I'm going to clue you folks who weren't around back then in about a few things.

First of all, I've got some bad news for some of you. "Back in the day" all the bands weren't these great and wonderful things filled with wild geniuses. In fact, there were plenty of groups that sucked big time. Selective memory? Hell, yeah. Maybe we don't remember most of them because they weren't memorable. I mean, do you even remember that band from last week that caused you

to walk out of the show 'cause they sucked so bad? After all, only people

frank•discussion



who are assigned to review the show for zines have to fully bear witness to such trash. Pity the poor souls that have to sit through their whole fucking sets so they can write that "the third band, The Stinking Defeated Old Lepers, really sucked". No thanks. Yes, Vagina, there were always bands that were derivative or did bad covers of more popular shit. There were always bands that had really pathetic lyrics. Most of them didn't go anywhere, for good reason, and consequently nobody even remembers them now. Big fucking surprise. If I had a dollar for every fucking band that started a song with "this song is another pathetic whine against Apartheid", I could have easily afforded to buy paper towels to clean up my puke after hearing such dribble. And much, much more. There were also good bands that, for one reason or another, never became well-known. But that sure as hell ain't no reason to worship them. Or anyone else, for that matter.

All the New Shit Sucks

Do you really feel that way? Well, there's a quick and easy way to solve that little problem. It's called writing or doing something that doesn't suck. Are you just lazy, or do you expect someone else to do it for you? Are the lyrics idiotic beyond words, a bunch of tired cliches (that weren't even that funny or good the first time you heard them) randomly strung together? Is there too much whining and complaining about not being properly breast fed or whatever?

Write better ones.

Or how about all the songs that sound like the last 892 songs you've heard? Well then, can I make a suggestion? Write something NEW, asshole! It ain't easy to write good shit. But who ever promised you it would be?

Let's face it, it's always "safer" to write something that sounds like

other shit you like, maybe in the hopes that people will say "hey, that sounds just like The Heavy Metal Frogs! I like it!" It's also the easiest way of cashing in on something that somebody else did. After all, if you write something really new, then somebody else might not like it, right? And yeah, it just might actually suck.

Go Your Own Fucking Way

OK children, I'm going to tell you all a little story. Now pull all your chairs together in a little circle and hold hands...

Once upon a time all the birds were envious of the eagles, and the hawks, and the falcons. They liked the way they seemed to control the air space and ruled over everything. They thought that the way they flew was Da Bomb (or something). So they decided to copy them.

Everything was going really swell until they started to get really fucking tired. And guess what happened? No, they didn't just have to land after learning their "valuable lesson". This is a different story. Nope, they became someone else's dinner. That's right, those falcons and eagles found their meal in a pouch delivered right to their doors, and were soon gorging themselves on their creamy insides. Mmmmmmmmm. (Please stop crying, Bobby Joe and Brittany, or I'll have to give you something to really cry about.) The "moral" of the story is, uh, don't fucking copy someone else. Unless you want to have the rest of us feeding on your guts, that is. And for good reason. Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery and all that, but there are limits, you know.

To give you an example (for what it's worth), I'm going to let you all in on a little secret. I don't listen to a hell of a lot of punk. Never did. Hell, once the Feederz would release an album, I would already be so sick of it that I wouldn't listen to it again for years. In fact, for I didn't even own a copy of "Ever Feel Like Killing Your Boss", until a friend took pity on me and bought me a copy. That might be taking things to extremes, but that's the way I am. It can be kind of embarrassing when someone asks me what I think of some band and I have to say that I don't have a clue. I guess I never was too much of a "scene person". But I respond well to my name. Or to offers of free beer.

Where do I get ideas for material? The truth is, I don't have a fucking clue half the time. Or I get the shit from a source some might consider a little odd. For example, the chorus from "Games" came from an old Tab cola commercial. At the end of it, we even sang it straight...sort of. Ha, take that!

What Would You Do Now, Smartass?

I can only tell you what I am doing now. I'm experimenting with playing slide guitar and different tunings. I'm trying to come up with a new way of playing slide that does not sound like Da Blues or something "pretty", but rather something that has more of a jarring effect. Maybe it will work. And maybe it won't. But I won't ever know unless I try it, will I? I'm also fucking around with Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian shit to see if I can make it work for me. But I assure you that it won't sound much like Brazil '66. More like Brazil 666, maybe...

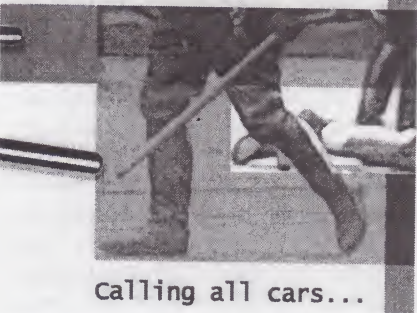
Lyrics. Don't know yet. Haven't written them. Give me a fucking break! One thing at a time, OK? But I don't think it's going to sound a hell of a lot like Green Day.

Why? Well... why the hell not?

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I (too) Remember Kickboy Face

I remember Kickboy Face. Not just another Face in the crowd-but the more passionate mouth that went with the Face. An advocate, judge, and juror of any vibration that resonated "punk rock." *Slash* magazine was the p-rock manifesto that propped up the Dils, and the Germs and Weirdos, and X and Y and Z in LA circa 1970-something.

I was writing at the time for *Back Door Man* magazine-more of a meat and potatoes fanzine that espoused the virtues of Aerosmith and Ted Nugent (back in 1975, this wasn't nearly as



embarrassing as it sounds today) alongside Patti Smith, the Velvets, and Iggy, and so forth. What we lacked in visionary proclamation and trendiness, we more than made up for with attitude and bile. We taunted fans of John Denver and Jim Croce and Jerry Garcia to "loser leaves town" death matches (of course, we never imagined that those losers would themselves eventually do this voluntarily). Tho in retrospect, this sounds like an obvious and fully appropriate gesture of teenage angst, a token of malevolence that anyone nowadays could imagine signing up for, back in the sonic quicksand of the pre-Ramones, pre-Dictators 70's, the state of RnR, much like today, sucked. Orowheat diarrhea and voices of protestation were but timid coyote howls in a gopher-infested wilderness.

Maybe Claude Bessy's end symbolizes the final punctuation mark of p-rock -n-roll. All that's left are the hand-me-down hippie entrails of Phish and the disco coattails of "La Vida Loca". It's like a cesspool of musical snot-an impermeable pustule of green dead white cell noise. Who the phuck cares?

But *Slash* was leagues ahead of its moment-trumpeting underground stuff that was (from the get go) often pretentious, seldom non-derivative, and (once in a while) visionary and blessed. We at *Back Door Man* stuck to our Blue Oyster Cult and blue oyster-collared mean-fisted r-n-r inclinations (Kiss). The art-damaged Screemers had nothing on Pere Ubu (circa "Heart of Darkness"/"Final Solution"); our roots were in the South Bay, theirs' were in the unabashedly *Slashedly*-turfed Hollywood. So the lines in the sand were drawn; the Angry Samoans, e.g., were less than an acceptable punk-rock icon to the Hollywood powers that be-and this included Kickface and company. Besides, we called Darby a homo ("*Homo-sexual up the ass, Homo-sexual-Darby Crash*"), which instigated even more bad vibes,

and then the Rodney Bingenheimer (groupie-turned-Disco/glamophile-turned "New Wave" radio DJ) tune ("he can't read and he can't talk, he's LA's favorite punk-rock jock. Glitter bands and Bowie's cock-are his ideas of New Wave [sic!] rock...8 PM and Rodney's on the air-he's beating off in Joan Jett's hair", etc.) sealed our fate as not-to-be-scene black sheep once and for all.

Then they (Kick and *Slash*) actually ran a Samoans interview (a heresy up to that point in time) that Richard Meltzer proctored. The lyrics to "Get Off The Air" were the piece's lead-in and were about as unpolitically correct as you could get in the greater *Slash* universe. Much flack issued from the Rodney camp (who had banned us from all the clubs in LA county by promising generous radio-time recompense to booking agents and sycophant bands (X's manager and Bingenheimer lawyer [New Wave incest?] Jay Jenkins threatened to sue us and "take away all our equipment" if the Rodney tune did not cease and desist!). But then there was Kickboy who, all grudges aside, stood by the piece-running it in the hallowed halls of *Slash*-speak. I too remember Claude Bessy-when the pre-Samoan (1977) VOM (the only band, aside from the Doors, who were ever tossed off the stage at the Whisky-A-Go-Go!) was thrashing and gnarling its way thru yet another "performance" of dissonant out-of-tune grunge from hell. Meltzer and I had just made it back from the Rainbow Mealworm and Bait Company in Compton, CA (not a friendly area). We'd loaded up a whole bunch of bronco worms (because they buck 5 feet off the ground), crawfish, and jumbo containers of 5000 live crickets (they wouldn't sell us roaches), and then dumped this trash on the Whisky stage-behind the barbed wire that already had been laid out. Well, it was during "Punkmobile" or "Electrocute Your Cock" or maybe our cover of "My Eyes Have Seen You" (which prompted the lofting of about 50 fresh-frozen sheep eyeballs at the audience-the place reeked of lamb stew) that I got a bit carried away (I "sang" 2nd lead to Mr. Vom himself) and somehow ended up throttling the *Slash* staff photog, Melanie, with a towel from the front of

the stage. She turned bright purple. Fortunately someone nearby broke the grip, and I let go and she fell backwards-and so did I.

The memory of this, etched in the forefront of my consciousness nearly two weeks later, goosed pangs of guilt and sh-sh-shame when I (for reasons that escape me now) entered the *Slash* office

netherworld (could I interview the Dils? Was that it?). Quickly I encountered the countenance of the Kicked One-and even quicker launched into apologetic blather about the horrible-ness of my towel-strangling act w/their photog. "STOP!!! STOP IT!!!" I stopped. He looked at me, as if I had totally betrayed a true moment of affected punkoid angst by confessing remorse! "STOP IT, BEFORE YOU RUIN THE WHOLE THING," I recall him spurting out. "DON'T YOU DARE APOLOGIZE!!!" So I didn't apologize (maybe I should've peed on the galleys of the new issue they were laying out, since I now needed to atone now for my wounded punk attitude credentials!)-but as I reflect back on this, on all of this, I think of Mr. Vom somewhere up in Portland, and ex-Samoans who I do not keep in touch with, and now, last but not least, I think of the late Kickboy Face...who allowed me to save my punk-rock face (at least in the *Slash* offices that day). OK then, no apologies. ⊕

Maybe Claude Bessy's end symbolizes the final punctuation mark of p-rock -n-roll.

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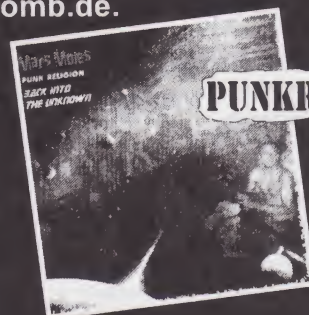
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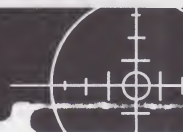
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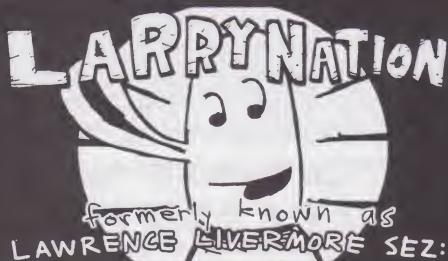
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We all have things that we hate. Some are quite reasonable; we'd be less than human if we didn't have an antipathy for Nazi death camps or bomb-throwing fundamentalists or people who persist in wearing flares 30 years after the end of the 60s.

But it's equally human to hate things for completely irrational reasons. Ben Weasel used to wax apoplectic over kids who wore backpacks to punk shows, and while I'm not bothered by that particular affectation, I can understand his feelings; many's the time I was tempted to strangle some clown with his idiotic wallet chain.

Set me loose in a roomful of people and I can find a host of things to get annoyed with, but normally I take a deep breath and remind myself that I'm being unreasonable, that I'd be better off taking these issues up with my therapist than letting myself be driven round the bend by people with bad haircuts or a propensity for shouting stupid things at the top of their lungs.



But there's one prejudice I don't think any therapist could cure me of. I've had it ever since I can remember, and it seems to get stronger as the years go by. I refer to my almost violent dislike for the sight, sound, or smell of people chewing gum.

Go ahead and laugh, I'm used to it. But before you dismiss me as a nutcase, listen to the logic of my position. Granted, in the overall scheme of things, chewing gum is a minor offense, if you consider it an offense at all, somewhere along the lines of farting in an elevator or sneezing into the salad bar.

But hear me out. It's a stupid and ugly world we live in, and much of the stupidity and ugliness is beyond our power to control. We can't do much about genocide or crimes against the environment or the proliferation of Starbucks that threatens to overwhelm us.

Sometimes the best we can do is to refrain from being stupid and ugly ourselves, and that's not always easy. I'm not at my best when I've had too many beers, and yet beer has its undeniable attractions. I suppose chewing gum has its attractions too, even if I'm incapable of appreciating them.

Still... Think about a beautiful and intelligent girl. She's got good manners, she comes from a good family, she studies at

Harvard or Berkeley, she has a smile that can make you melt in your tracks, and when she opens her mouth to speak, the world is full of music.

Then she stuffs a gob of Juicy Fruit between those lovely lips, and suddenly her IQ drops about 150 points, her manners take a run for the border, and she has all the appeal of some brainless cow chewing its cud in the middle of a field.

And with all due respect to our bovine cousins, at least chewing a cud makes some sense. After all, there are nutrients in that grass they're masticating, while gum contains little beyond tooth decay and noxious chemicals.

Most people don't think too highly of cows. When Morrissey tried to muster outrage against meat-eating with the song "Meat Is Murder," even his fans laughed out loud at the line "This beautiful creature must die." To see a cow as a "beautiful creature" is a bigger stretch than even most vegetarians can make. Face it, they're big, dumb, and ugly beasts who stand around chewing and crapping until someone lops their heads off and turns them into hamburger.

So why should I have sympathy for people who insist on looking like cows? And anyway, cows at least have the decency to stay out in their fields. They don't sit next to me on buses and trains chewing their cuds, loudly smacking their lips, and reeking of artificial flavors.

If there's one thing that irks me above all else, it's when kids try to turn gum chewing into some sort of expression of rebellion, or even, god help us, punkdom. It makes as much sense as the gutterpunk out to overthrow the government by not taking a bath, or the mall rat who's going to undermine society by getting her nose pierced.

But get any gaggle of riot grrls or Cometbus crusties together, and you can bet half of them will be expressing their youthful independence with gum and cigarettes (that's an even more preposterous one: "rebellious" by giving yourself cancer and handing fistfuls of money to the ultra-right wing tobacco companies, but I don't have time to digress here).

Where did the kids get the idea that chewing gum was rebellious? Why, from the adverts on MTV: gum is portrayed as fresh, stylish, and above all, a way to annoy parents, teachers, and adults in general. Of course, no one stops to think just who is making those commercials and pocketing the profits. Hint: it's not your fellow kids. It's, for want of a better characterization, The Man. The same one who

sells you all the trappings of your radical lifestyle, after persuading you that you need them in the first place.

The Man, of course, has a vested interest in keeping kids in an infantile state, and that interest is not merely commercial. America, the country that virtually invented adolescence, is constantly finding ways to prolong childhood to ever more unnatural lengths. It's no coincidence that the USA has a higher drinking age and a higher age of sexual consent than just about anywhere else on earth, and even less of a coincidence that it also tops the world charts in teenage drunkenness and pregnancy.

Until the past century or so, teenage behavior was not an issue

Sometimes the best we can do is to refrain from being stupid and ugly ourselves, and that's not always easy.

for the simple reason that teenagers as we know them didn't exist. You were either a child or an adult, and were expected to act like one or the other. People got married and went to work when nature seemed to dictate they should, i.e., when they reached puberty.

After the Industrial Revolution, though, it became necessary to keep kids in school longer, partly because the Age of Machinery demanded greater skills than could be learned in elementary school, partly because people needed to be conditioned to live a more structured sort of life than that expected of peasant farmers. Suddenly people who in a previous century might have been commanding armies or raising families were told that they were still children who didn't have enough sense to run their own lives until they were 18 or even 21.

Of course while they lost some freedoms, they gained others, above all the ability (especially if they happened to be middle class) to dick around and avoid responsibility for an extra five or ten years. Any of you who have ever lived in a college dorm will be especially aware of what I mean: the comfort level of an army barracks or minimum security prison combined with the emotional climate of a day care center.

It's not only the corporate masterminds of industrial civilization, though, who are conspiring to keep young people in an extended state of borderline idiocy. Parents, many of them perfectly well-meaning, play a big part in it too.

There's a complicated psychology involved (isn't there always?), but what it boils down to is that baby boomer parents don't want their little darlings to grow up too quickly, if at all. For one thing, they want to see themselves as being perpetually young, and having adult children doesn't fit in with that program. Secondly, parents are terrified at the prospect that their kids might turn out to be smarter than they are.

Put another way, they want their kids to succeed, but on the parents' terms. Example: when I was 18, I went to work on an auto factory assembly line, which is what Detroit boys did in those days if they didn't go to college (or, as in my case, got kicked out). It was well-paid, but brutally hard and mind-numbing work (read Ben Hamper's (I)Rivethed(I) for details), and I lasted less than a year before drifting off into a variety of other occupations, only some of which were legal.

Fast forward some 40 years to when Green Day and Lookout Records made their breakthrough into the mainstream. I'm at a family gathering and people have been congratulating me, but in the middle of dinner, my dad announces, "You know if you'd stuck it out at Chrysler, you'd be making some pretty good money now." He went on to tell me how the kid across the street

had just been promoted to foreman and had bought a new house out in one of Detroit's better suburbs.

"I'm doing all right in the record business, Dad," I told him. I was tempted to inform him that I had made more money in the last couple years than he had in his entire life (that's the sort of charming repartee that often passes for conversation in our family), but was able to resist.

"Yeah," he said, "but that entertainment business stuff, that's not reliable, it's all up and down, but people are always going to need cars."

If I were still a teenager, I might have rolled my eyes and given him a big "Whatever," but there was no point. I knew that as far as he was concerned, I'd always be his half-witted son who only by an improbable series of miracles had managed to survive for half a century. I think he still expects me to turn up at his door

one day saying, "Mom, Dad, can I move back in with you?"

But if parents have always had a tough time realizing that their children are growing up, or grown up, I think there's something qualitatively different today, and it spills over into larger societal attitudes. Much has been said about this being a no-fault society, i.e., one in which nobody is ever to blame for his failings or misfortunes. People are never lazy or stupid or bad, they're learning disabled, they're the victims of racism or sexism or having accidentally seen their daddy's wee-wee as a child.

The same mentality that has 25-year old "kids" sitting around their parents' house watching Springer reruns while mom cooks and cleans for

them has created an underclass of mental children in adult bodies who are incapable of taking care of themselves and have been conditioned to believe it's their right to be taken care of.

If, as I do, you see society as the ultimate extended family, there are some conflicting values at work here. If everyone is my brother or sister, I don't want to see anyone suffering or going without. At the same time, I don't want to see my brother or sister lounging around, maybe doping or drinking themselves to death, while I pay their bills. It's not that I'm stingy; I'm more than happy to help out, but just handing over some money every week to feed someone's crack habit, well, who does that really help?

Some people have a problem, though, with the government "butting in" and telling welfare recipients that they've got to get jobs, send their kids to school, stop having more babies, etc. "It's a violation of their rights," they scream.

To which I reply, "What rights?" The minute you say, "Hey, I

If, as I do, you see society as the ultimate extended family, there are some conflicting values at work here. If everyone is my brother or sister, I don't want to see anyone suffering or going without. At the same time, I don't want to see my brother or sister lounging around, maybe doping or drinking themselves to death, while I pay their bills.

can't take care of myself, I need you to help me," you're putting yourself in the same position as the kid who says, "Mom, Dad, I can't afford to pay rent anymore, can I move back in with you?" Most moms and dads will say yes, but unless they're real suckers, they're not going to say, "Sure, son, move back in and stay as long as you like, rent-free, and if you need money for beer or dope or anything, heck, we'll give you an allowance for that."

Actually, there are probably quite a few parents like that, which might explain why there are so many imbecilic and thuglike children running about. But it's one thing, you might argue, to talk about the principles of child-rearing, and quite another if you're discussing the workings of a welfare state.

I disagree. I think it's more or less the same thing. What, if not familial loyalty, prompts us to set up programs to help those less fortunate than us? And what, if not the expectation of familial loyalty, lets us think that we have a right to a handout from the better-off when times get tough? The cynical might say that we only provide welfare to people because we're afraid of what they might do if we didn't, but I don't think that's true. If society didn't really care what became of its less productive citizens, it could just kill or incarcerate them.

And yes, that happens, but for every person who's locked up, there are dozens receiving some sort of public assistance, whether it's welfare benefits or subsidized housing or job training, or simply the free public education that's offered to every child in the country. We do this because it's in society's interest, sure, but also because at the heart of things, we care, at least a little, about what happens to our fellow human beings.

I've been on both sides of the picture. These days I pay a lot of taxes, and I don't mind. In fact, as long as they're spent on things like good schools and energy-efficient public transportation, I'm happy to pay taxes. I've also been the beneficiary of other people's taxes: I've been on welfare, and I was fortunate enough to get an education at what was, until some cynically corrupt politicians of both the right and left got their hands on it, one of the best public university systems in the world.

I doubt I'd be where I am today—I'm not sure I'd be anywhere at all—without the help I got from society when I needed it, and I'd be an idiot to begrudge that same help to other people who need it now. But there's a world of difference between helping people and giving them a free ride. The worst parents I've known, the ones who raised their kids to be drug addicts and teenage suicides, were not mean or brutal or violent; if anything, they were the opposite. They let their kids do whatever the hell they wanted, and then acted shocked and horrified when it

turned out that what junior wanted to be was a gangbanger or a crack whore.

It's the same thing with helping the poor. You can't just hand them money or shopping carts or free high school diplomas that they can't even read; just like kids who grow up assuming that mom and dad are only there to hand out free money, poor people who've never known anything else learn that it's the government's job to take care of them.

Good parents, on the other hand—and I've known many—balance freedom with responsibility. Get good grades, do your household chores, be respectful to your family, they say, and we'll trust the choices you make about everything else. It's the carrot and stick approach, and old-fashioned as it might be, it works for raising children, and it works for building a healthy society.

So I'm tempted to say to society at large: "Grow up, take some responsibility, get a job, even." But then I might have to listen to my own advice, and just as revenge is a dish best served cold, advice is a dish best served to someone else.

If I can belabor the society-as-family metaphor just a bit further, it seems that ours is a bit dysfunctional these days. It reminds me of a family where the parents aren't getting along at all, but are staying together "for the sake of the kids." On one hand you've got the brutal, domineering father who'd just as soon slug his kid as look at him. For him you can substitute the whole right wing, law and order mentality that thinks the solution to all our problems is more prisons, more guns, and more executions.

But then check out Mom, who probably used to go to Grateful Dead concerts, took too much acid, and is now a weepy, whiny dingbat who can't imagine that one of her children could ever have a bad bone in his body. The kid gets in trouble for something minor, say, shoplifting or skipping school. Dad clobbers the hell out of him, and then mom is like, "Oh, you poor baby, here's \$50, go out and have some fun with your friends."

You'll recognize Mom, of course, as the rabidly left wing establishment, the folks who never saw a criminal or a scrounge or a bum who wasn't a helpless victim of society. If Dad thinks the solution to everything is a good beatdown, Mom wants to feed chicken soup (or vegan Food Not Bombs) to all the poor dears.

Is there any way to find a middle ground between these two extremes, to create a society that's generous and fair, but doesn't tolerate bullshit from spoiled brats? It shouldn't be that hard, but America as a country is still going through its own adolescence, with all the precipitous mood swings and dramatic overreactions that implies.

So I'm tempted to say to society at large: "Grow up, take some responsibility, get a job, even." But then I might have to listen to my own advice, and just as revenge is a dish best served cold, advice is a dish best served to someone else. As much as I'd like to see society grow up, am I really ready to grow up myself? St. Augustine once prayed, "Oh Lord, make me pure, but not yet." My own prayer might be, "Make the rest of those assholes behave so I don't have to." ⊕

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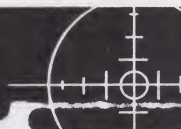
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The Sexual Revolution Has Not Been Televised.

For the past week or so I've been feeling under the weather, so I've been clocking a few hours on the couch, watching TV and doing nothing (which is kind of redundant, I guess). Anyway, I was watching "General Hospital" and during the commercials they promo'd what would be on "Oprah" that day—the topic was male sexual addiction. (I'm still unsure why they



segregated the topic by gender. I guess female sexual addiction is a whole other animal, or maybe they were afraid if they got all those female sex addicts in the same studio with all the male sex addicts that they would break out into a mass orgy or something.) Normally I don't watch "Oprah"—why would I, I'm not a middle-aged housefrau—so I don't know if this is typical of what she does or not, but I decided to watch it since I had nothing else to do and the thought of getting up off the couch to find something else to entertain me was too much for me in my weakened state. Plus I'm fascinated by sex and sexuality (my own, as well as other people's), and have actually spent a lot of time in and out of college studying human sexuality and all its little quirks, fetishes, and oddities. But I don't know too much about sexual addiction, so here was my opportunity to find out.

When I started thinking about it, my main question was—what's the difference between being a sex addict and just someone who likes sex a lot? I'm a very analytical person, so I wanted to know about the boundaries and specifics in this context. Where should the line be drawn between horniness and addiction? And which side am I

on? I was hoping Oprah would shed some light on this subject for me, but that didn't happen. I consider myself an open minded person. I'm from the school of thought that says "I'll do my thing, you do yours, and even if I don't like what you're doing I don't care, as long as you don't bother me with it." I am also blessed with being relatively un-shockable, particularly when it comes to sexual proclivities, no matter how odd I might find them. (I'm not saying I'll personally want to give it a try, but it doesn't surprise me or freak me out to know that these bizarre desires exist.) Having said that, I was absolutely shocked and disgusted by the things I heard on that show, and I'm not talking about the "real life" tales of these male guests' sexual addictions. To me, these guys all seemed like fairly regular perverts, not horrible, evil men trapped by the wills of their penises. OK, one guy was a college professor who repeatedly seduced his female students after offering to take erotic photographs of them, and he might well have needed counseling. But we're not talking about a teacher who was having sex with underage girls. We're talking about 20-something women having consensual sex with a 40-something man. (That's something we call "dating" around here.) To me, the power issue going on there presents more of a problem than the sex itself. For example, if he was threatening to give the women bad grades if they didn't let him take nude pictures of them, or that he would help them further their career in exchange for sex, that would be a cause for alarm. Yet that didn't seem to be the situation. These women volunteered for the nude photo part, and no one said they had not consented to the sex that came afterwards.

But I'm getting away from my point. In between the periods when the audience, Oprah, and her "experts" embarrassed these

guys who were "addicted to sex" (and who've since been cured of their nasty habits, of course), they would break for commercials and offer warnings that "your man could be addicted to sex". It was kind of like a *Cosmo* sex quiz, only the stakes were higher—if you score well on the *Cosmo* quiz it just means that you're an easy lay, whereas if your mate scores high on this quiz you're presumably married to or dating a dangerous psychopath. The warnings were in the form of a question, for example, "Does your mate masturbate often?" (I'm paraphrasing, since I didn't write the questions down.) Keep in mind that they made no attempt to define "often." To a very religious person, "often" might mean "ever".

Another question was, "Does your mate often buy or look at pornography?" And a sub-question of that was, "Does he hide these items from you?" It seems obvious to me that if you're in a relationship with a person who gets freaked out if you masturbate, then obviously you're gonna hide your porno cause if it's

But we're not talking about a teacher who was having sex with underage girls. We're talking about 20-something women having consensual sex with a 40-something man. (That's something we call "dating" around here.)

discovered that you regularly buy *Jugs* or *Hustler*, that's only gonna lead to more fighting.

Anyway, when they came back from that break Oprah asked one of the men on the panel if these types of behaviors were present during his addiction and he answered something like, "Yes, I would wake up in the morning and the first thing I would think about was sex." All the women tsk-tsked at this. Why, I don't know. I wake up next to my husband practically every morning, and almost every single morning when he wakes up his dick is hard. I've never had a penis of my own so I can only make assumptions here, but I would imagine that the correlation between having an erect penis and thinking about sex is not an abnormality. Then he added, "If my wife refused to satisfy my needs, I would have to masturbate before I went on with my day." Oh, the horror! I'm no psychologist but I don't see the problem there. It seems to me that masturbating, as opposed to, say, going and getting a blow job from a prostitute or having sex with some anonymous stranger, would be a good way to take care of this "problem" and not something that should be interpreted as a sign of sex addiction. I really think that this man's wife needs counseling, not him. She's clearly sexually dysfunctional if she doesn't accept the fact that it is normal for people to beat off, particularly when they have a differing sex drive from their partner. Your man isn't a sex addict if he wants it every single day, he's just randy; if you don't want to screw him, let the man jerk off, for chrissakes.

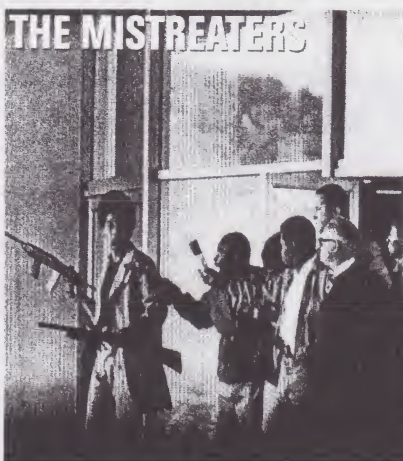
As I continued to watch this, my main concern was that even though I don't regularly watch Oprah, I know for a fact that millions of people (mostly women, I'm guessing) do. On top of that, they seem to take what she says as gospel. If the woman recommends a book, a week later it's on the *New York Times* best-seller list, and we all know that the general American populace barely reads at all! She actually gets people to read! She's a powerful figure, there's no doubt about that. And now there are women everywhere, all across this damn country, who are giving their husbands a hard time (excuse the pun) if they catch them alone with their dicks in their hands or with a copy of *Penthouse* in their desks. These are dangerous ideas that she's planting in her viewers' heads. I thought back to my college years, when I lived at home and was single; I masturbated all the damn time and for a million different reasons. If I was tired and couldn't fall asleep, I would have my way with myself and be out like a light in fifteen minutes flat. Stressed out during finals? Yep, there's my hand down my panties again. Where is the harm there? I don't see it. But according to Oprah, I too was probably a sex addict because I would masturbate "often." I don't know if I've been cured, but I don't masturbate as often now. Now I'm married, so when I'm horny or stressed I just go wherever my husband is and convince him to have sex with me (which doesn't take too much work). On top of that, all of the perverted things my husband and I do to each other are sanctioned by the

LESLIE GOLDMAN

state. So nyah-nyah, Oprah. You ain't gonna stop me from getting off!

Why have I brought this up, you might ask? Well, I didn't know what the hell to write my column about this time. A lot of people write about music-related stuff in their columns, which is cool. But I do a lot of that already in my zine, so I wanted to write about something else (and I know you zine reading types beat off, so don't even pretend otherwise). I realized that I had an opportunity here to reach a wide audience of disenchanted youths and people like me (who may not be quite as youthful, but are probably still disenchanted), and if there is any one thing I would like to tell the world, it would be to impress upon you people that IT IS OK TO MASTURBATE! It is also OK for your lover, spouse, significant other, son, daughter, mother, and/or father to masturbate. It does not make you a sick pervert if you touch your genitals. It is normal human behavior. And if you do it once a month or once a day, if it makes you happy and you're doing it somewhere where no one else can see you (unless you're a peepshow girl or something and masturbate for a living, which is a whole other topic and one that I'm sure would send Oprah & co. into an absolute frenzy)-go on being your bad self. girl. It's OK, OK? Consider this a public service announcement. Thank you, that is all... ⊕

I'm the editor of *Carbon 14* magazine. You can contact me at C14/PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125.

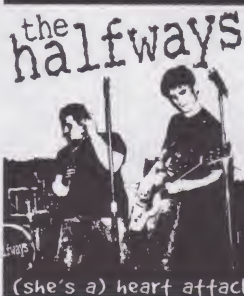


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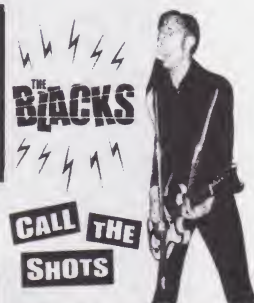
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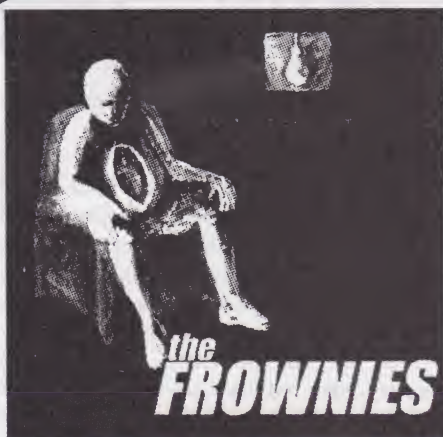


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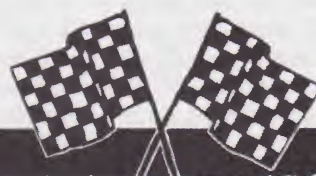
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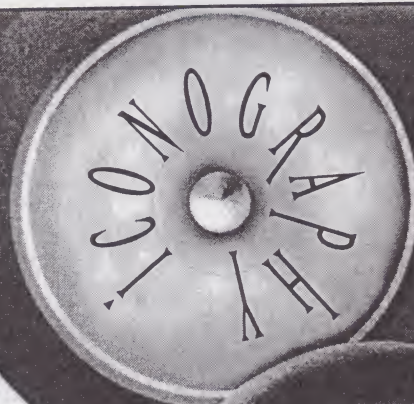
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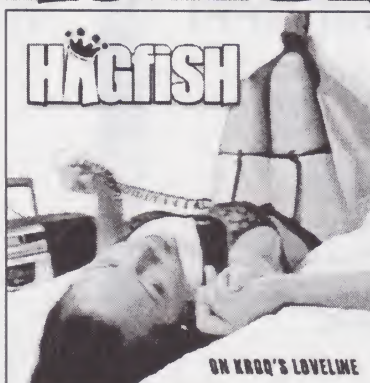


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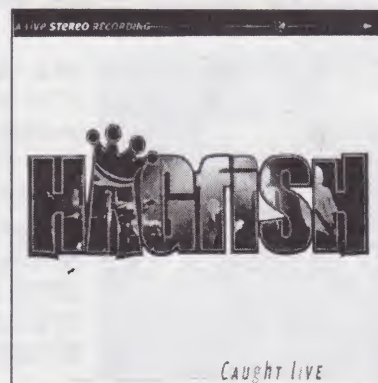
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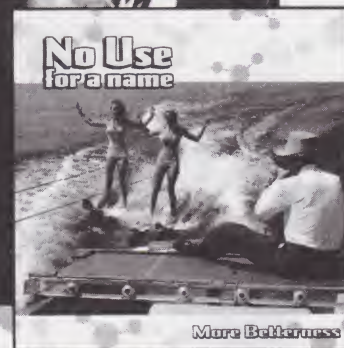
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Until the Goblins Come... or "Speed Hurts" by JOE

"Joey's nervous and the lights are bright/There's something going on that's not quite right." - Wire, 1977

"All speed freaks are liars; anybody that keeps their mouth open that much can't tell the truth all the time or they'd run out of things to say" -Lester Bangs on Lou Reed

Time is getting faster. Twenty-four-seven. Faster faster. Sleep when you're dead. Mother Nature can't support that much work and play, so Man in His Ingenuity invented Speed. Fuck natural sleep cycles and seasonal rhythms, we got a new civilization to get finished in a hurry so we can burn it down and start all over again. It's kind of like a rave.

I first got interested in the history, composition, and uses of methamphetamine when I noticed just how casually everybody in Santa Cruz was using the stuff ten years ago. Cross tops, ephedrine, bennies, crank were terms I had grown up with in the perimeter of my radar while being weaned in California's hickoid Central Valley. The first time I ever did crank was when I was seventeen, and then not again for about

three years. That's when it suddenly seemed to be everywhere. The thing about growing up after the sixties, and seeing intelligence as something worth striving for, I was determined never to end up like some of those sad bastards you see in bus stations whose brains long ago had evaporated in the Summer of Ease, so if I ever took drugs I wanted to understand everything about that drug beforehand. Of course drugs had to be taken, if for no other reason than too many squares and bad taste assholes who were probably doing the secretary in between praising Jesus and State were telling me not to. But I wasn't going to be a hippy dipshit, damnit. I was going to be a scholar like Richard Evans Shultes, William Burroughs, or Aldous Huxley. A heretic intellectual. So I hit the bookstores and libraries (this was before the internet) and read up on coke,

acid, Angel Dust, etc. The funny thing about speed, however, was that there was barely anything on it. No big books, no journalistic exposés. Nothing like the seminal *Politics of Heroin* by Alfred McCoy, which detailed the U.S. Government's involvement with the opium trade, or even a Timothy Learyesque self-indulgent autobiography by a reformed or evangelical tweaker. Why the silence? I wondered.

I know people in Northern California who indulge in tweak as casually as masturbation. Speed is a "hard" drug, which is why it is probably appreciated by generations of urban hipsters who try to differentiate themselves from the despised hippies who said "speed kills". The problem is that speed can kill you if you do it right.

Only recently, say since the mid-nineties, has the media paid any attention to an epi-

demic which has existed for years on the West Coast. Most eighties-era drug literature, medical and journalistic, focuses exclusively on cocaine, with maybe a footnote or two on the amphetamine family, usually a paragraph explaining amphetamine away as a sixties-era phenomenon. Writing an article on the subject in the early nineties, however, I was able to gather enough anecdotal and documented information from unlikely sources to perceive that the amphetamine molecule has had a significant and, until recently, downplayed roll in the careers of some of the Stars of the twentieth century, as well as in the work of those shadowy paper pushers who determine world policy and in their slaves in the millions. Speed may be dangerous, but information is even more so.

Speed is a workaholic's dream at first,

ephedrine from herbal mahuang, a natural stimulant first discovered thousands of years ago by the Chinese, no one really saw much of a use for the amphetamine molecule until the Japanese tried to make a diet pill out of it in 1919¹. Not having much success, they documented and shelved their samples until an American rediscovered and synthesized what the drug culture would one day call speed in 1927². Soon thereafter it became commercially available in the U.S. as Benzedrine, a decongestant, and was found to be a means of calming hyperactive children (in the form of Ritalin) and as a central nervous system stimulant which could combat depression and fatigue³.

By the time of the Spanish Civil War, ships were stockpiling amphetamine sulphate in their emergency rations. A few

bunker days⁴. Two New York physicians actually published a work in the early seventies which analyzed the dead dictator, his personality and neuroses, in an attempt to demonstrate that he may have indeed suffered from amphetamine psychosis. The book is cited in Klaus P. Fishcher's *Nazi Germany: A New History*, but unfortunately I haven't been able to find a copy. In William Shirer's seminal *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, Shirer, who was an ABC correspondent in Berlin during the Nazi years, reports that among Hitler's (careful) detractors the Leader was known as the "Carpet Chewer" because in fits of frustration he would fling himself on the floor of his office and chew the edge of the carpet⁵. Sounds like a twaker, but who knows?

The Germans are credited with the invention of methamphetamine, a purer,

Most eighties-era drug literature, medical and journalistic, focuses exclusively on cocaine, with maybe a footnote or two on the amphetamine family, usually a paragraph explaining amphetamine away as a sixties-era phenomenon.

but it tends to stray to the dark side of the force. As a pseudo-grown-up, I haven't gone anywhere near methedrine in quite some time. Like certain beautiful but fragile women, it's more trouble than it's worth. But I'm not preaching. The Drug War has too many dirty secrets to mindlessly buy into its propaganda, as does the mainstream media. Nevertheless, playing with speed, like heroin, is playing with the devil, and he's got a really mean bite.

What follows is something I haven't seen too much of in any media, an attempt at a comprehensive history and study of the scientific and social development of methamphetamine and the cultures and subcultures that embrace it. Not the end-all or be-all since, quite frankly, much of the available information is often inconclusive and often contradictory.

Although it was first discovered in 1887 (a disputed date), perhaps by isolating

years later, as the Second World War kicked into gear, amphetamine use increased greatly, as four national armies were feeding their troops speed to keep them awake and fighting for 48 hours at a time, while away from the battlefields scientists on both sides popped pills in order to be able to work around the clock on "cosmic bombs" and such. The Nazi *Luftwaffe* crews were "inveterate pill chewers," according to Allen Geller and Maxwell Boas. They named their Reich's Little Helpers "Blitzes" after their method of warfare⁶.

Der Fuhrer, Adolph Hitler, was believed to be a big time meth addict. This is mostly speculation, but it is not completely unfounded. The Nazis were into weird shit which wasn't just limited to black magic and lederhosen. Hitler had a quack doctor by the name of Thomas Sorel, who used to inject him in front of witnesses with an unknown "vitamin" concoction during the

harder form of amphetamine which was originally available commercially around the world as dexedrine or methedrine, but lack of documentation prevents me from certifying that. Meth and its cousins proliferated in the postwar world the same way that polyester, television, and the threat of atomic warfare did. However, just as not everybody got to own their own H-bomb, not everyone got strung out. But a lot did.

In the late fifties sociologists realized that bored housewives and their teenagers were using Benzedrine for more than just headaches⁷. Members of the Beat Generation also counted "bennies" among their pharmaceutical perks, though speed was seen more as a tool to stay awake for revelation (and through poetry readings) than as a means for enlightenment like pot or the rare peyote. Jack Kerouac wrote *On the Road* in twenty days on a Benzedrine binge before his second wife threw him out

of their apartment⁸ Incidentally, Kerouac also introduced the unlucky Joan Burroughs to the inhalant buzz. After he showed Joan how strips of cotton taken from the inside of a Benzedrine can, when stirred in a cup of coffee, gave one a day-long high, Mrs. Burroughs developed a habit she would keep until her "accidental" death a few years later⁹. This technique was also employed by jazz great Charlie Parker, who became addicted to amphetamine when he moved to the west coast from New York¹⁰. For his efforts he ended up receiving shock treatment in an insane asylum, which Kerouac mentions in *Dharma Bums*^{11, 12}.

In Britain during the sixties, Methedrine ampules and more often pills like "Purple Hearts" and "French Blue" kept the anal retentively well-groomed Mods dancing all night long and on weekends after a hard week of straight wage earning, while their tribal enemies, the Rockers, enjoyed the same substances on long motor bike trips¹².

delics to harder drugs pumped in by the mob in late 1967. A favorite money-making venture for an amoral hustler of the era was to take a young, naive, middle class teenager who had come to the street following the hippie dream, pump her full of meth and acid, and then rent her body out to the neighborhood¹⁵.

As mentioned above, the Velvet Underground were denounced as a bunch of "speed freaks". A relatively large amphetamine and LSD scene flourished in the atmosphere of Andy Warhol's Factory and around its famous house band. Warhol had a faction of assistants whom he called the "A-Men." More affectionately, they were referred to as "those fags on speed"¹⁶. This could perhaps account for some of the energy which went into Warhol's multi-media publicity machine during the mid-sixties, as well as at least part of the disintegration of the personalities of such players as Edie Sedgwick and Paul America later in the

Throughout the seventies speed enjoyed popularity in various subcultures, such as the punk scene in England. Sid Vicious "learned" to play bass sitting up all night on amphetamine sulfate while "playing" along to a scratchy Stooges record. Jon Savage records that a combination of amphetamine and unusually nice weather fueled the British punk explosion, which grew out of inspiration provided by the CBGBs crowd across the Atlantic²⁰. In the States speed consumption, aside from a small number of hardcore speed freaks in New York and elsewhere, was at an all time low, as a new generation of artistic hedonists consumed coke and ludes instead of amphetamine and acid (nobody wanted to end up like Sky Saxon or Roky Erickson). It wasn't until the government's war on drugs began focussing on coca from South America that the West Coast labs, centering in San Diego, began to prosper as never before²¹. The East Coast was, for the most

In Inglewood a biker was murdered by his "brother" bikers for dealing PCP, which was considered "bad for families".

Stateside, methamphetamine for shooting or snorting became an economic staple for biker gangs who set up commercial distribution lines for criminal chemists¹³.

"The Sky's high and 6000 miles away/I should be tired/But all I am is wired."
- "Motorhead" - Lemmy Kilmeister

While bikers were dealing speed the other side of the American counterculture, the hippies, were denouncing it, as Allen Ginsberg did in *The LA Free Press* in 1965¹⁴. Speed abuse leads to toxic psychosis, which is indistinguishable from paranoid schizophrenia, and this is perhaps why the drug culture of the time coined the famous "speed kills" slogan. Along the same lines, Timothy Leary told young heads in New York to avoid the Velvet Underground scene because Lou Reed and company were a bunch of "speed freaks". Nevertheless, in spite of these warnings, Bruce Shlain and Martin A. Lee describe how Haight Ashbury turned from "free love" psyche-

game¹⁷. One good document of the Manhattan amphetamine culture in the mid-sixties is William (Billy) S. Burroughs, Jr.'s autobiographical novel *Speed*. Billy had inherited William Sr.'s literary ambition and his mother Joan's hobby, and attempted a fusion of the two in this work, which was never published in his lifetime. Though somewhat amateurish at times and unfairly darkened by his father's work and persona, Billy's book is a hauntingly authentic account of one young man's war of aggression on his own nervous system. Billy died of liver failure in the early eighties; perhaps not coincidentally, the liver is the organ where most speed is metabolized, though Billy was also an alcoholic.¹⁸

Amphetamine was not just a drop out drug. A *New York Times* article from 1972 relates how Dr. Max Jacobson, one time physician to the Kennedys, used amphetamine as a secret ingredient in injections he gave the presidential family, as well as other famous clientele such as Truman Capote and Tennessee Williams¹⁹.

part, Crystal-free since organized crime, which kept tight reign on both the heroin and cocaine supplies, had no need for meth²².

M.M. Kirsch, in his book, *Designer Drugs*, which contains interviews with narcotics cops, drug smugglers, addicts, and outlaw chemists, saw Crystal in the mid-eighties as the drug of choice among gay club scenesters and bikers, although the market certainly extended beyond those groups. One must include teenagers looking for kicks (just as teenagers did in the fifties), college students, truckers, the bored, musicians, artists, and workaholics.

Many speed chemists see themselves as principled and not like the ones who "don't know what they're doing," yet many dangerous or lethal drugs have been traced to speed labs, such as PCP and synthetic heroin. These have been seen by veteran chemists as the products of amateurs who don't have their facts straight regarding proper procedures or potential consequences. In Inglewood a biker was mur-

dered by his "brother" bikers for dealing PCP, which was considered "bad for families"²³.

In the nineties things, with pre-millennial pacing, have gone into high gear. Mexican criminal cartels have taken the speed trade away from bikers and made it into an international industry. This has been facilitated by NAFTA, which has increased commerce between the US and Mexico by 50%. At the San Ysidro/Tijuana border a car needs to pass once every thirty seconds in order to maintain the mandatory flow of traffic, allowing for numerous potential carriers to float across the border²⁴. Utilizing Chinese ephedrine, which is legal in Mexico (ephedrine was scheduled by the FDA in 1990), the cartels sneak this raw precursor across the international border into the southwestern states, where labs can be found in rural areas. This in turn has created an epidemic in white, rural America, as well as on Indian reservations, which mirrors the crack epidemic that fucked up inner city black America so devastatingly. The media has been sensationalizing this new epidemic (of course), focusing on a few horror stories and not acknowledging that some people can, and do, tweak and get away with it. But a whole hell of a lot of people don't escape unscathed. One of the more grisly horror stories comes from New Mexico, where in 1995 Eric Starr Smith, Sr. chopped off his son's head on a highway. He told authorities that the devil made him do it, but the authorities figured that the amount of methamphetamine in his blood might have been a deciding factor. Another horror story involves a narcotics cop who had infiltrated a biker gang, gotten strung out on meth, and ended up shooting two of his fellow officers in a precinct station in Arizona²⁵. Then there's the woman who stabbed her children to death multiple times.

When I had to deal with a ticket for train jumping in Sacramento in 1997, almost every other petty case that went before the judge while I was waiting for mine seemed to involve possession of methamphetamine. Researching a story on a murder which took place on an Indian reservation in Mendocino County in the mid-nineties, I was told that in the economic vacuum created by the evacuation of the lumber industry from Northern California, speed manufacture and distribution in the evergreen hills had become the region's number one cottage industry, supplanting even cattle. Chemists cooked it up in trailers, and bikers then took it to the Sacramento Valley. I was told a humorous tale about some speed freaks who had stolen a trailer from Sacramento and hidden

it on their land. Their method of hiding involved planting some shrub trees in front of the trailer which was about 20 feet long. For some reason the cops were able to see through this clever camouflage and prosecuted the tweaking thieves.

In a *Spin* magazine article, which I have cited above, the environmental damage created by speed alchemy is detailed. Labs outside of Fresno, Sacramento, and Bakersfield, using ephedrine and hydriotic acid, leave carcinogenic waste in their wake. Cooks have died from the ingestion of poison gas, lungs bleed, a cop contracted non-Hodgkins Lymphoma after participating in too many raids, bodies are found with their mouths full of dirt after a vain attempt on behalf of the victims to stop the throat from burning. The economics of California's Central Valley, where if you're Mexican or white and poor you'll probably spend your whole life working some shit job for the benefit of wealthy white agribusiness barons, makes the speed industry worth the risks. It's the whole "American opportunity" thing. Meanwhile the walking dead chainsmoke, fold paper into intricate squares, lose their jobs, pick their faces to pieces, and slap

around their wives and girlfriends, who in turn neglect their kids while partying 24/7. One former tweaker ended up blowing up the Federal Building in Oklahoma City²⁶. No longer concentrated on the West Coast, the speed empire has already appeared in Montana, Colorado, and as far away as North Carolina, according to *Time* magazine.

What exactly is speed? Speed closely resembles the alkaloid mescaline, though unlike the psychoactive ingredient in peyote amphetamine doesn't behave as a psychedelic and is completely synthetic, despite having organic roots going back to mahuang or analog chemicals. It's also sympathomimetic. That means it acts like several neurotransmitters that are zipping around in your skull right now. These include catecholamine, dopamine, which affects appetite control and pain suppression, and norepinephrine, the chemical which primarily controls the "fight or flight" instinct. By inhibiting or manipulating these neurotransmitters through its presence, speed does what it does, which is create enthusiasm, increase concentration, raise your IQ by eight points, and make you feel like an erot-

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ic Jesus. It also prevents the neurotransmitter which tells your brain that you are hungry from doing its job, makes one endure sleep deprivation for unhealthy amounts of time (which is necessary for the mental health REM phase), and causes one to verbalize one's inward thought processes to the point of absurdity. Increased use causes psychological dependency, new levels of tolerance that require higher doses to achieve the same effect, and worse comedowns. Side effects include an accelerated heart beat; delusions of grandeur; dermatosis (acne); Huntington's Chorea or "speed bumps" (where one's body engages in bizarre upper body movements, such as the jerky movement of limbs and the twisting of the head on the neck; aural and visual hallucinations; sensations of bugs crawling on one's skin; lowered immunity; and a higher risk of contracting AIDS or Hepatitis C through the sharing of needles (if that is the method employed); constipation; irritability; difficulty with urinating; and violent behavior²⁷. *The Phoenix New Times* also mentions the presence of shadow people that you can begin to see when you've done a great deal of speed. My own experience is that you do feel like something is watching you that you would prefer wasn't, and that there are indeed shadows on the periphery of your vision. That's probably paranoia, but the perspective provided by amphetamine suggests a feeling of truth in these perceptions. The things you see feel real. So was the awareness that my gums and teeth were bleeding, and the propensity I acquired for getting fired from various jobs.

One anecdote about speed that I heard involved a young lady who shot her arm full of meth one day and began to believe shadow goblins were coming for her from out of the darkness. She was terrified as she heard their voices whispering insults and obscenities. Finally she leaned out of her apartment window and yelled to them to come on in, and so they did. Each one of the grotesque creatures had a huge erect penis. Mockingly, they danced around her, pointing at the object of their persecution.

There are four popular ways to make crystal (methamphetamine hydrochloride) in its Dexedrine and Methedrine forms and crank (methamphetamine sulfate). They all involve precursor chemicals which have been put under tight control by the Feds. One method, the Mexican method, involves the reduction of ephedrine. Another method involves Phenyl-2-propanone (P-2-P), a substance which figured in the old biker recipes along with aluminum trihydrate. Both of these have been reclassified as Schedule II substances under the Controlled Substances Act of 1970, as have most amphetamines²⁸.

(Methamphetamine hydrochloride is legally available in 15mg capsules with a writ from a physician, and is marketed as Desoxyn, an appetite suppressant also used to treat Attention Deficit Disorder, mostly in children.) Prohibition and scheduling make it extremely difficult for small time chemists to obtain the substances needed for synthesis from pharmaceutical companies, and unauthorized possession is punishable by fines or imprisonment. Even before the scheduling of the precursors, Federal prosecutors used suspicious private orders of chemicals from various firms as a means of tracking down designer drug operations. However, resourceful chemists can make the precursors from mundane things like aluminum foil, as narcotics agents have discovered²⁹. Washing with ice makes yellow or red powder look clean like crystal. The different colors of speed are symptomatic of what the dope is cut with. Colorado Red is cut with Red Devil Lye, whereas good crystal usually looks like white shattered glass until it's chopped up, but that can probably be faked too.

For a \$150,000 investment (early nineties estimate) in a speed lab that can churn out 25 pounds of meth for a return of \$25 per 1/4 gram sold, methamphetamine is worth the risk for many people. It's worth jail time, exposure to noxious chemicals, and being blown to bits through mistakes or carelessness. With suppliers ranging from Mexican metafina to chemical moonshine from the trailer parks, the demand probably won't go away until everyone grows up, dies, goes to jail, completely loses their minds, or simply gets bored (as I did). It isn't like an organic drug, so it doesn't need a particular climate or an open field. It can be made practically anywhere with the right tools. New information portrays methods of synthesis that involve simple household chemicals and 7 Eleven Big Gulp cups, while urban tweakers will wear their identity on their sleeves. A recent zine xeroxed out of the lower Haight Ashbury scene was called *War on Sleep*.

Many people will tell you that doing speed is stupid. It certainly has its drawbacks and problems. It kind of works like a credit card, where one borrows from Peter to pay Paul at 100% interest. In the nineties economy, which leaves users with little recovery time before they have to go back to one of their seven temp jobs, it probably isn't worth doing it. But then, maybe it is. I would advise everyone against doing something illegal (especially since this is in print), and there's no doubt that the repercussions of addiction and busts are hard on you, but ultimately you

sort of own yourself. Speed doesn't always kill, but it can certainly hurt you. It can lead to debt, madness, heroin, murder, a pathetic death, and-if those things seem glamorous to you-you should recognize that rarity is to be desired and all of those sordid results are as common as bullshit. You know the drill. The pillar of light has a propensity to turn into the Ugly World with even uglier people, you yourself being the ugliest of all.

In closing I might say that the fruits of drug knowledge are like the fruits of any other kind of knowledge, and that paranoia can sometimes be your friend. Blind trust is indeed blind, whether it is placed in the underground or respectable media, or in chemical solutions. If you use ritualistically, use wisely and watch your ass. Special thanks to Matt Shapiro for the copies of the *Spin* and *Rolling Stone* articles, as well as for certain medical documentation. ☉

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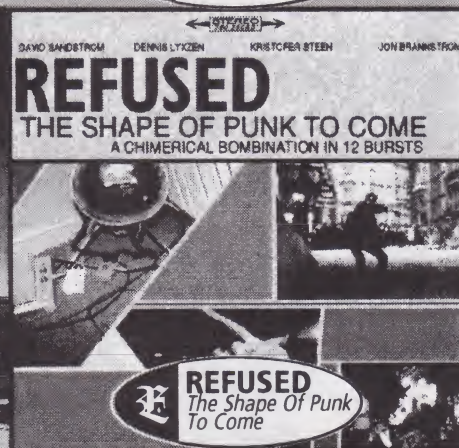
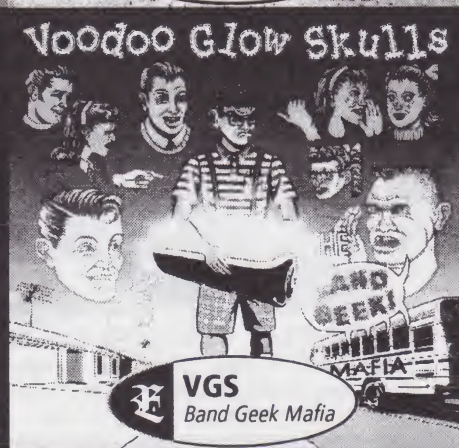
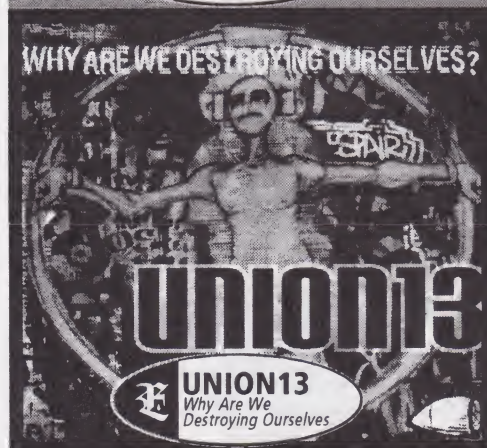
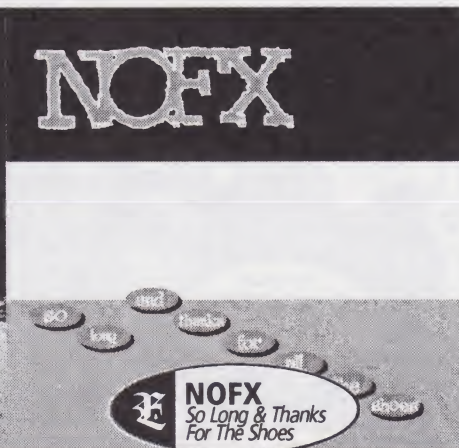
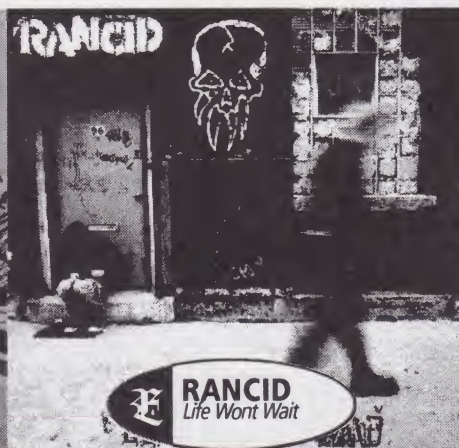
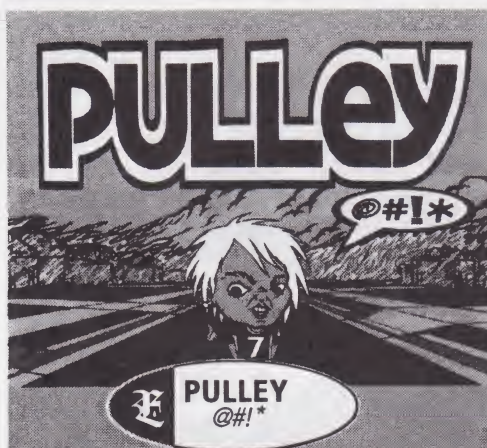
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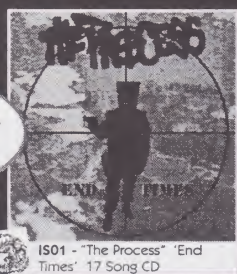
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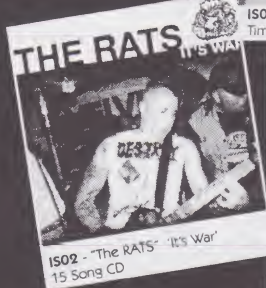
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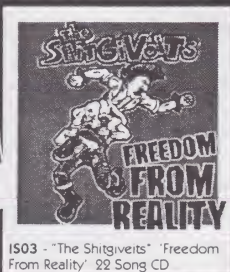
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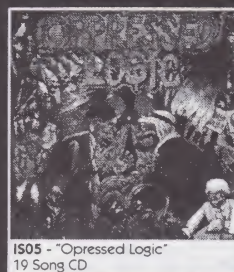
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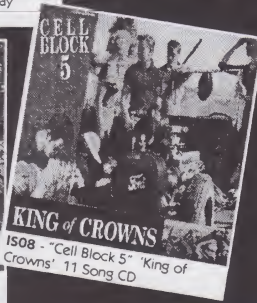
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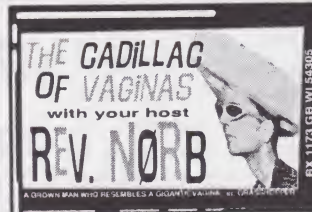
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Hello and welcome to another installment of this column. Today's topic is: "What is a sell-out?" A sell-out is defined as SWWRRKK!!! FZZZTTT!!! FWEEEEEE!!! BGZTL!!! SPROING!!! ...er, sorry, for a moment i forgot what magazine i was writing for. AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT BUT EQUALLY AS MINDLESS: So anyway, Summer '99 finally rolls its soggy ass up to Wisconsin, hence the ice fishing starts to really suck the dog, so my band packs up our socks and stickers and lights out upon our annual Big Exciting Annual Nine Or Ten Day Tour. On odd numbered years, we go to the East Coast. On even numbered years, we go Somewhere That Is Not The East Coast, and spend most of our time wondering exactly what the fuck we were thinking when we decided to go there. This year, our traditional Memorial Day Weekend departure time got bumped back to August, on account of a rather protracted revolving-door membership period that saw not only the dreaded Drummer Change but no less than five different people filling in on bass duties (including yours truly after i decided that i'd rather vote to kick our existing bassist out a few days before a show and do it myself rather than endure him for another week) in as many months. Due to some pernicious combination of fickle fate, wacky coincidence and bad karma, the bass player and drummer we finally wound up with were, of all goddamn things, our original bass player and drummer — neither of which had been in the band since 1993. Nutty! Therefore, unlike most bands who lose credibility with their fans as they lose original members, my band is actually in the process of losing credibility with the fans by getting our original members back. Only Boris, folks. Anyway, after months of intensive hunkerin' down, the new old rhythm section is deemed as ready as they'll ever be, and we decide it is time for us to go blow our cred on a national level, so off we go to Cincinnati, first stop on what we deem our "AFCCentral" Tour (hold the Titans and Jaguars) and also known as "The City Whose Name I Cannot Spell Without The Aid Of My Spell-Checker™." On route to Cincinnati, or Cincinnati, or WHATEVER THE FUCK IT IS, we pass thru Indiana (hey, if there was another way, i'd DO it!), which is peppered with public service billboards proclaiming incredibly entertaining anti-smoking statistics like "TOBACCO KILLS A TRUCKLOAD OF HOOSIERS EVERY DAY!!!" and "TOBACCO KILLS A TITANIC'S WORTH OF HOOSIERS EVERY SIX WEEKS!!!" As i pass these billboards, all i can think of doing is standing on the roof of the van, pumping my fist in the air, and yelling "SO LET'S HEAR IT FOR TOBACCO!!! WHOO!!! HIGH FIVE!!! HIGH FIVE!!!" I am beside myself with glee, as i decide that this will make an excellent joke onstage tonight in Ohio — i mean, what warms the cockles of a Buckeye audience's collective aortas more than invoking images of yacht-loads of dying, emphysematic Hoosiers, ya know??? I'm in! They'll love me! They'll anoint me their savior from the North! They'll dump peanut oil all over my glistening pecs and fan me with palm fronds! They'll hail me as the second coming of Boomer Esiason!!! Their love shall

endure longer than the temples of our gods!!! I am a made man in the Buckeye State!!! All i have to do is remember to tell the joke on stage. Simple. As we enter Ohio, i decide to further expand upon my belovedness by re-doing a sight gag i once partook of in Cleveland some years back: Noticing the stunning similarities between the contours of the little white state-of-Ohio emblem on the green road signs for the Ohio Turnpike and the contours of my Fruit of the Looms™ (i'd refer to them as "whitey-tighties," but i'm afraid they ain't particularly tight, nor, alas, very white [Barry White?]), i bought a laundry marker and drew a map of Ohio on the front of my underwear, with the Ohio-Michigan state line running the length of the colored stripe on the waistband, and a number of principal cities illustrated hither'n'yon across my crotch — none more grimly evident when i pulled down my pants on stage that night than the large star denoting the state capitol of Columbus (get a map and figure it out yourself). We get to the show, and i immediately head to the bathroom with a Sharpie, so i can draw on my underwear. I try to do the whole operation with my undies still on. Bad call. I wind up putting Michigan and Ohio on the wrong sides of the waistband, and have to draw a bunch of arrows to correct this cartographical gaffe. I certainly hope i don't get rushed to the urologist or anything tonight; i'd have a lot of explaining to do. After the botched map-making procedure, i fall in with the other worker drones and help lug furniture from the downstairs of the coffeehouse wherein we shall gig to the upstairs.

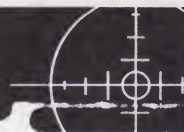


As i pass these billboards, all i can think of doing is standing on the roof of the van, pumping my fist in the air, and yelling "SO LET'S HEAR IT FOR TOBACCO!!! WHOO!!! HIGH FIVE!!! HIGH FIVE!!!"

I smash into lots of stuff in the process. Hey, you get what you pay for. Following this mad parade of slave labor, the joint begins to fill to the bursting point with all manner of wayward Cincinnati youth, alt.punk geeks, and Mutant Pop Records dorks, some travelling up to 16 hours to catch two of the three "real" Mutant Pop bands (Kung

Fu Monkeys, Connie Dungs), and one of the fake ones (us). Batting leadoff were the Kung Fu Monkeys, whom we had just played with the week before. They rule. They're like a bargain basement American Toy Dolls minus the guitar pyrotechnics imitating Herman's Hermits on one bright blue surfboard chewing apple-flavored Bazooka™ while the salt air makes the guitar go out of tune and the sharks swim away contentedly munching the discarded Bazooka Joe™ comics, and that you gotta respect. Their bass player, Pontiac, had to sign a contract that said he would always smile on stage, keep his hair short, not swear and wear a sweater vest when they asked him to — which, of course, it being the middle of summer, they did. Batting cleanup were the Connie Dungs, whom i consider to be more or less the quintessential purveyors of the Mutant

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Pop "sound," such as it is. Having been abreast, as they say, of this band more or less since its early days, i can honestly say that i never thought they would amount to anything much more than a Queens Jr./Screeching-Weasel-minus-the-little-lead-thingies-and-the-edge/Riverdales-wannabe-kids-next-

door type of band; the kind of band that you'd give one of your band's singles to after they gave you a copy of their demo 'cause they were nice enough fellers, even though you knew you were just gonna tape over it two weeks later. However, after multiple listenings of their second full-length, "Driving on Neptune," i have come to the shocking conclusion that, you know, god-dammit, that's actually a pretty good record. I mean,

it isn't necessary for my survival or anything, but it is pretty good. Double nutty! The really crazy thing about the Connie Dungs (specifically their "Driving On Neptune" record) is that they actually provide somewhat conclusive and shocking evidence that (Mutant Pop CEO and all-round blushing bon vivant) Timbo's aesthetic vision is not complete and total horseshit. Now who'da thunk THAT??? I mean, Timbo is a five-star guy in a one-and-a-half-star world, but as far as most of the tepid plop he tries to foist off to the general public as quality "pop-punk" goes, well...i've heard bowls of oatmeal absorbing skim milk that got my blood racing faster than that stuff. Part of the problem is that many of the bands on his label (since my band has two records on his label, you can feel free to include us in any negative commentary i may spew forth), for a variety of reasons, are unable to deliver a fully-actualized specimen of their musical vision. The other part of the problem is that, even in the cases where their reach doth not outstrip their grasp, it's like, pfft, who fuckin' CARES anyway??? It's like these bands spend all this time and effort (and, if they record at, say, Sonic Iguana, all this money) shooting at the triple 2 on the dartboard, never realizing that we're playing Cricket and even if they hit it, they ain't gonna get any points anyway and they oughtta just throw at the 16 or something. I mean, the Proms and Kung Fu Monkeys are (at least somewhat) great, but they don't really adhere to what i would consider to be the baseline Mutant Pop Sound™, which would seem to support a vision of

Timbo as cockamamie crackpot who succeeds despite himself — but then, somehow, against all odds, the Connie Dungs come barreling thru the froth with even a dumber name than MY band and the absolute baselined of Mutant Pop Sound™ sounds and put out a

record that is not merely tolerable, but darn good, without deviating one iota from the Mutant Pop Master Plan For Half-Assed World Domination. WHAT DOES IT MEAN??? WHAT DOES IT MEAN??? TIMBO HAD A VISIONNNNN!!! TIMBO HAD A VISIONNNNNNNNN!!! AAAAAGGGGGHHHH!!! Okay, whatever (they also get props for stealing same hanged man illo from Dr. Frederic Wertham's infamous anti-comic-book screed Seduction of the Innocent for use on the cover of their "Songs for

Swinging Lovers" CD that i stole to use for a flyer for my then-band Depo-Provera in 1985, headlined "SWINGIN' PARTY!" after the song on the then-current "Tim" album by the Replacements). Anyway, the Dungs (now featuring the artist formerly known as Dave from

Anyway, the Dungs only play out like twice a year or something because they need that time to refine their light show and fine tune their dazzling array of scissor kicks.

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Spodie on guitar) only play out like twice a year or something because they need that time to refine their light show and fine tune their dazzling array of scissor kicks. They had a much fuller and tighter sound than one would expect from a band named after a cross between a TV anchorwoman and poop. Their drummer wore drumming gloves. And all that that implies. My costume of choice for the tour was my green M&M suit — better to be the M&M of Love and melt in one's mouth, not in one's hand than to be the red M&M of cancer, or the brown M&M who gets continually kicked out of Van Halen's dressing room, i reckon. I remember to pull my pants down and to inform the crowd that the last time their football team was in the Super Bowl, i was put in charge of bringing records by new, groovy bands for halftime music, and the new groovy records by the new groovy bands were "Beware the Misfits" and the first Red Rockers album, but i forget to tell the joke about the dead Hoosiers. Dag nab it! And i did SO want to be loved!!! Other than that, the show is great. People actually buy copies of our really good records like "Little Yellow Box" and "113th Man" that people usually skip over to buy copies of our really bad records like our split with the Parasites. Will wonders never cease! We continue our slog through the AFC Central with a return trip to Pittsburgh, which is one of the coolest looking cities in America. They got these like, buildings, and these hills, and these train bridges really up high, and, fuck, you know, all that kinda shit. It's hip! I always pictured Astro City (from the comic book of the same name, duh) as being Pittsburgh in real life, just as Metropolis is supposed to be New York, etc., but, recently, after Steeljack escaped from government custody in Astro City, he had to hitchhike west from out past Topeka to Pittsburgh to find the Honor Guard, so i guess the joke's on me. We have a return engagement at the prestigious Neville House, i.e., the basement where we played two years ago (and where i walked in on somebody getting a blowjob while he was cooking hamburgers, then hurriedly slunk downstairs just as the Mud City Manglers began "Caught With The Meat In Your Mouth"). Paul #1 hates playing shows like these. Pretty much if it ain't like the kind of place that will impress his friends back at the bar when he tells them we played there, he don't wanna play there. I, of course, have no friends to impress, so what the fuck do i care. The show is, apparently, the last show ever to be held at the Neville House — after umpteen years of punk rock, vandalism, destruction, underage drinking, carnage, hamburgers and blowjobs, they can't have shows there any more because — get this! — the landlord is evicting them. Boy, go figure! I enter the friendly confines of 326 N. Neville, and quickly make my way into the bathroom. I quickly make my way back out of the bathroom. I suspect i was the last person to flush the toilet, back in 1997. Damn, i knew i shouldn't've left the toilet seat up! Much of the house, except for the basement, appears to be locked, or boarded up, ostensibly to keep me from wandering in on the residents while they get blowjobs. I sit in the dank basement,

My costume of choice for the tour was my green M&M suit — better to be the M&M of Love and melt in one's mouth, not in one's hand than to be the red M&M of cancer, or the brown M&M who gets continually kicked out of Van Halen's dressing room, i reckon.

reading the spray paint. Quote me on this: "I suspect someone is not getting their full security deposit back." We play with some band called Loser's Club, and some other band, and the Chargers, from Cleveland, who rock and bang into each other a lot on stage and are among the finest bands i can think of named after an AFC West team. They tell the crowd that they will be back "when the Cleveland Browns are kicking the Pittsburgh Steelers ASS!" Oh well, 2007 isn't that long to wait. Following that, the Mud City Manglers astound me by actually playing a cover of "Jumpin' Jack Flash" that almost doesn't suck., which is surprising, given that all covers of this song known to me are uniformly horrible. I mean, the Candy Snatchers version might be less uniformly horrible than, say, the Vibrators version, which is, in turn, less uniformly horrible than the, say, Boyce & Hart version, but, all in all, petty demarcations of non-uniform horribility aside, they're all pure shit. First off, you can NOT play the riff right with only one guitar. Second off, i'm not so sure you can play the riff right AT ALL on a conventionally-tuned guitar, given Keith Richards' penchant for the freaky "open F" tuning. Then again, what the fuck do i know? Maybe i just don't ROCK, DUDE. Regardless, it is a testimony to the Mud City Manglers rockitude and fortitude, dude, that they are almost able to pull it off successfully.

We finally take the stage, such as it is, which is all rotten and soggy, apparently due to some type of upstairs plumbing problem which caused water to leak onto the stage for months. The guy who set us up was nice enough to scrape off all the mushrooms, though. I decide i am a big important rock star, and i get my own personal cinder block to stand on, not like the other peons in my band. Hello. I am 34 years old. Today i am dressed as a gigantic, antler-wearing green M&M. I am standing on a cinder block in somebody's damp, filthy basement in Pittsburgh, singing songs about microwave ovens while i frantically point this way and that with my big white plastic M&M hands. What did

YOU do today? The ending of our set is punctuated by a big hunk of soggy ceiling falling on our drummer Ron's head, exploding in a cloud of fiberglass dust. He begins to hack and cough, and informs me in no uncertain terms he is unable to play an encore. Since i am a big rock star and have my own cinder block, i make us play the entire Circle Jerks "Group Sex" album as an encore anyway. For the rest of the night, we have to listen to Ron whine about how he can no longer breathe, and how he's gonna get black lung disease, and how his lungs will be fucked for all eternity and he's going to have to spend the rest of his life in an iron lung because part of the ceiling fell on his head. The next morning, Ron decides that his lungs have healed enough that he can start smoking pot again. Wow, talk about miracle recoveries! Ten minutes after Ron's miraculous cure, he begins to attempt to get members of the band to bet him money

HIT SQUAD

that he won't get his back rubbed by a girl tonight in Baltimore. "I'll bet five of my dollars against one of your dollars that a girl gives me a back rub tonight! Any takers? Any takers?" Silence. "I'll bet SIX of my dollars against one of your dollars that a girl gives me a back rub tonight! Any takers? Any takers?" Finally, in order to more or less just shut him the FUCK up, i take his bet. If a girl rubs his back tonight, i owe him one dollar. If not, he owes me six. Even if i lose, it'll be worth the dollar to shut him up. After thirty seconds of glorious silence, Ron pipes up again: "Man, I gotta get better odds! I'll bet five of my dollars against one of your dollars that a girl gives me a back rub tonight! Any takers?" I eventually renegotiate the deal to a 5-to-1 payoff, mainly to shut him up. Mmm, marijuana is brain food! We arrive in Baltimore ahead of schedule, so we go to a shopping mall to kill time. We wind up at some closeout store; i forget the name, i think it was something like "EconoPimp." It RULED. If you think the ladies department of Wal-Mart™ is the pinnacle of cheap, wacky punk duds now that thrift

store shopping officially sucks, think again. IT'S ECONOPIMP™ ALL THE WAY!!! I got these crazy purple and orange vinyl jackets and bright blue boots and lavender Hush Puppies™ and all sorta crazy stuff, totally dirt cheap!!! I was walking around with a leopard print golf bag for a while, until my bandmates finally talked me out of buying it. "Nørb, what the FUCK are you gonna do with a leopard print golf bag? You don't golf!" Ummm...give it to my girlfriend? "WHY???" Because it's a goddamn LEOPARD PRINT GOLF BAG, THAT'S WHY!!! Is there no ROMANCE in your heart??? Bah...they also had lotsa great things like bright green suits, magenta ties, and other staples of the neophyte whoremonger's attire; i highly recommend making EconoPimp™ your one stop clothing shop, it's very, er, fly. We play with the Thumbs, Fuses, and Doc Hopper, at a cool little joint called the Ottobar. The Ottobar is conveniently located within walking distance of many apparently outstanding strip joints, so my band leaves the club immediately after loading in. Three hours later, they return, telling tales of twenty-three dollar drinks which came equipped with free dick rubs. Ron, of course, being a thinking man's idiot, had the stripper rub his back instead of his dick, thusly informing me that i, in fact, owe him a dollar. As i hand his hard-earned greenback over, i ask him what the backrub cost him. "Seventeen dollars." Hmm, i thought it was \$23? "Well, i paid her \$23, but you paid me a dollar, so that's \$22, and i didn't have to pay you the five dollars, so that's \$17." I stare blankly, then tell him that with shrewd financial accounting skills like the one's he's got, it is truly a mystery why he has to borrow money from the band to get his power turned back on. The Thumbs have a very thick, short, loud sound, thumblike in every regard. The Fuses

sound kinda like the Thumbs, but more fusey. I was sent a copy of their single on American Punk Records, but i refused (and continue to refuse [huh, get it, re-FUSE?]) to listen to it because in one of the song titles they use "your" instead of "you're." The one thing about Doc Hopper that everyone i've ever talked to agrees upon but i have yet to ever see mentioned in print is that these guys are a fucking EXCELLENT cover band. I mean, really top notch. Their rendition of the Monkees' "Sunny Girlfriend" is a fantastic version of a fantastic song that was just screaming out to be covered fantastically, their

other cover-staples like "Uncontrollable Urge" are a little more obviously gimmicky but no less enjoyable. They also got that one "She's a Cokehead" song, which isn't even a cover! Crazee! We play. The most exciting thing about our set is that i find that i can kick the ceiling, so i do that quite often to keep myself amused. Perhaps i am a naive twerp, guilty of taking all those John Waters propaganda movies co-sponsored by the Baltimore Chamber of Commerce to heart, but i had far higher hopes for playing in Baltimore. I thought it would be all inbred and wacky and stuff; it's actually no less boring than Washington DC. I mean, EconoPimp™ was great, but

the caucasians in this city really have to work on their inbreeding. Oh well, at least the Orioles lived up to everyone's expectations this year. Onward to Providence, Rhode Island, our first non-AFC-Central stop on the tour (hey, it's a routing gig!). We drive thru their quaint, narrow streets to the show, hitch our horse and buggy outside the Met Cafe, and unload. My (prepare thyself!) girlfriend (woo hoo!), a resident of Boston who will hereafter referred to as "She Whom I Met At The Rat" (ha, you little kids think you're punk? I'm so punk that i not only met my girlfriend at the Rat, but i own stock in Converse™! Oh, and i also found pot for Steve Baise once. Whoop! I rule!), is going to be meeting me at the show tonight, so i go tell the big apey guy at the door to put her name on the guest list. He informs me that there is no guest list on Tuesday nights because it is "too dead," and, to further the problem, one of the bands actually has a guarantee. My ears perk up. Wow! A guarantee so exorbitant that the club can't even put one single person on the guest list! How much is this back-breaking stipend? "A hundred dollars," he groans, rolling his eyes. "We're NEVER going to make that." The whimsical life of the high roller becoming a bit much for me, i decide to walk the streets of Providence with Erik #1, our bass player. In Cincinnati, a number of alt.punk geeks informed me that it was made a matter of public on-line record that i should be thinking seriously about not showing up in Providence without flowers for She Whom, so i decide to try to forestall the rolling pin by seeking out the FTD man or regional equivalent. We walk this way and that thru Providence's quaint downtown area. No flowers to be found. A lesser man might be tempted to break into a Peter, Paul & Mary song, but i hold the line. Eventually, i decide to pick my own

"Nørb, what the FUCK are you gonna do with a leopard print golf bag? You don't golf!" Ummm...give it to my girlfriend? "WHY???" Because it's a goddamn LEOPARD PRINT GOLF BAG, THAT'S WHY!!! Is there no ROMANCE in your heart???"

lovely bouquet by yanking flowers out of roadside planters and so forth, so i start pulling a daisy here and there, occasionally accidentally uprooting an entire plant in the process. As we cross some quaint bridge or another, Erik says it looks like we're walking over the Seine, and i realize that walking down the street with him in such an overly rustic burg while holding a handful of flowers is beginning to overwhelm me with its sheer gayness, so i turn around and head back to the club. Ah, we'll always have Providence! I stick my stolen flowers in a Gatorade™ jar, and sit at the bar, where the only patron is some crazy chick in a military outfit, who is raving rapid-fire non-stop complaints at the top of her lungs, pausing only to knock back mixed drinks. "ICAN'TDODRUGSICAN'TDO-DRUGSSONOWIHAVETODRINKASMUCHASPOSSIBLE.IDON'T-LIKEITHEREIDON'TLIKEITHEREHEPEOPLEAREEVERYRUDE-THEY'REVERYRUDEANDTHEY'REVERYRACISTIGO-TOABARANDTHISCHICKSAYS"OHYEAH"TOMEISAYY-OUWITHAMANGIRLWHYDON'TCHUSAY"OHYEAH"TOHIM-DON'TSAY"OHYEAH"TOME!" She then stands up and screams "I AM NOT A RUG LICKER!!! I AM A DICK LICKER!!! A DICK LICKER!!! OKAY!!!" Much as i'd like to hang out and be further scintillated, i figure this is my cue to go set up merch, so i lay all our crap out on a table in the corner. The table is directly underneath a light, which is good, but the lightbulb is dark blue, which is bad, so i ask the bartender if there are any regular lightbulbs i can use instead. She directs me back to the big apey guy at the door. He directs me back to the bartender. I get no lightbulb. I know, i know — no lightbulbs on Tuesday, one of the bands has a guarantee. I go to the van, and get my own damn lightbulb. The Lombardis begin to play. They feature several of my girlfriend's ex-boyfriends. You couldn't swing a dead cat in Providence without hitting one of my girlfriend's ex-boyfriends, so i decide to put this theory to the test by going back into the street, getting a dead cat, and swinging it around in the club, but eventually the Lombardis and Double Nuthins make me stop on accounta i'm taking out too many of their members with it and they won't be able to play if i keep it up. Finally, my heart and other organs flip-flop with unbridled jubilation as She Whom I Met At The Rat shows up. She says her ears are burning, was i talking about her? I tell her no, but i was swinging a dead cat with her in mind, so maybe her pussy is burning. OKAY, I DIDN'T ACTUALLY SAY THAT, SORRY. Anyway, after the requisite mush, we walk her sister back to her car. She tells us not to do anything she wouldn't do. I resist the urge to tell her that, from what i hear, that doesn't cross too much off the menu. She also tells me that if i were to do her baby sister great wrong, that she would hunt me down and kill me. I try to act respectfully intimidated. I dunno. I've had, like, girls' older brothers who had done jail time and stuff tell me that, were i to take untoward liberties with their sister, they would hunt me down and kill me, and that seemed to drive the point home with far greater emphasis than hearing it from an older sister who is actually ten years my junior, but, shit, if my acting like i live in mortal dread of her sister tracking me down and poking me furiously with a rat-tail comb or something is

gonna keep the peace, fine, so be it. As we walk back to the club, we realize that we haven't seen each other all summer, and that we should go someplace and, you know, talk. And we should do it quickly. Like, right now. So we head into the van. And talk. Quite vigorously. We wobble back into the club, and catch the Double Nuthins, who are quite the rock studs, in the middle of their cover of the Real Kids' "Bad To Worse," then i dress up like Wolverine (my M&M costume was too stinky) and attempt to rile the crowd by informing them that the NFL title won by the long-forgotten Providence Steamroller back in the thirties is one more NFL title than the New England Patriots will ever achieve in their entire football careers, but everyone is too busy making fun of me for giving my girlfriend flowers in a Gatorade™ jug to really care. After we secure our budget-rupturing guarantee, i start the van and am almost ready to depart when i remember that i kind of left something in the vehicle earlier in the evening. I believe the technical term is "Coney Island Whitefish." Hey! Don't drink out of that Wendy's cup! Hey! I excuse myself, open my door, and toss the offending item into the rustic streets of Providence. Yo, no extra charge for the mayo! We then head up to the Braintree, Massachusetts Motel 6, where the constant talking in our room causes periodic bursts of wall-pounding in the adjoining room where the rest of the band is staying. Hey, it's not my fault that i've got a lot to say! NEXT ISSUE: Boston, New York, New Jersey, Cleveland — unless i get as bored with writing about the second half of the tour as you were with reading about the first half, then i'll just write about how eyeliner sucks or something? ⊕

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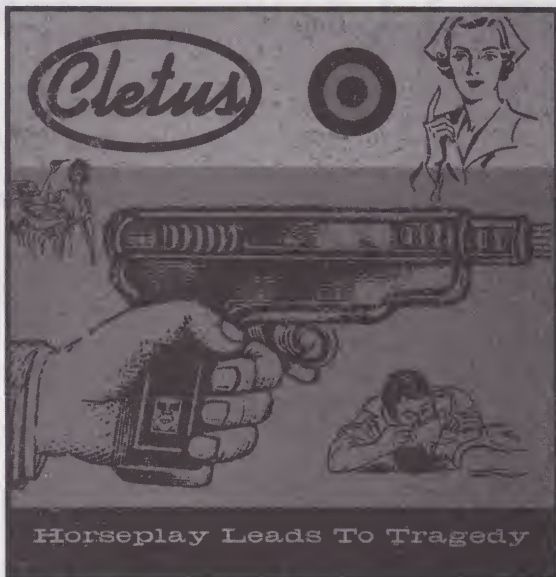
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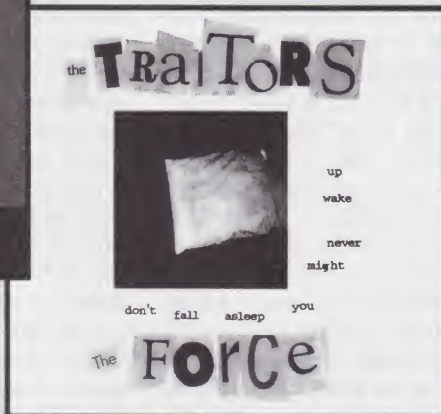


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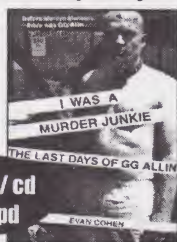
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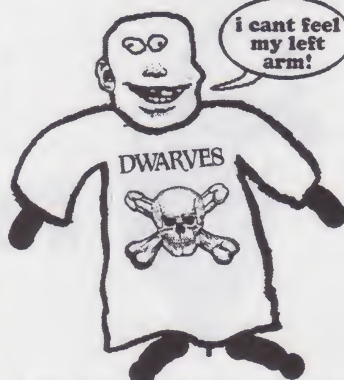


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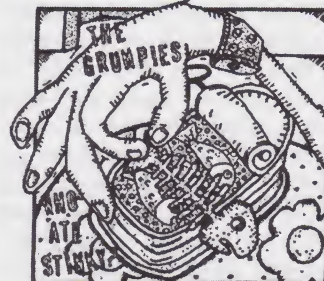
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faint at heart. 43 songs in all like fuck off for sure, like totally!



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the dwarves unrelenting schedule of damage are (i.e.the fuckhead, sit on my face,
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sure know how to damage a shit/holy motherfucker!"-people magazine

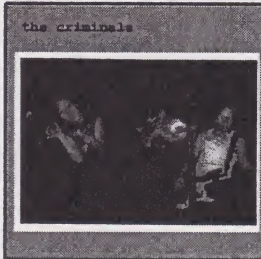


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“Are YOU READY? I said ARE YOU READY? Then let’s begin....

A fairly packed Crocodile Cafe recently witnessed an absolutely intense set by Riverside’s Bellrays, who were making their first Seattle appearance opening up for Nashville Pussy in Seattle on June 11th, 1999. Man, oh man. I’ve been digging their self-released “Let It Blast” CD (vinyl available on Scooch Pooch) for a couple of months now, but nothing prepared me for the all-out blast of seeing them live! “Maximum Rock and Soul” is right. The energy these cats exude on stage is absolutely incredible. This is 100% heart-in-it music, no fake poseur bullshit here, folks. I dare you to find a singer that has a tenth of the vocal power and soul that Lisa has. They absolutely smoked the crowd with hi-energy songs like “Changing Colors,” “King of the World” and “Blues For Godzilla.” They are by far one of the most original and rockin’ bands I’ve seen or heard in years.

They also happen to be extremely cool, intelligent, and reflective people. After their set I walked amongst the crowd, most of whom were there for headliners Nashville Pussy, and overheard lots of folks who simply did not get “it”—probably the same type of person whose small closed mind wouldn’t have “gotten” the Stooges’ unique melding of blues and rock, or the MC5’s free-jazz meets hi-energy sound back in ‘68. It was disheartening to overhear one cowboy-hatted “cowpunk” dismiss the band by saying “who gave them the idea that a black chick can sing rock ‘n’ roll.” Like, duh. You ever heard of Tina Turner, “dude”? I think those that got it walked away changed, and those who didn’t...well, they can keep on being sheep and hyping the latest trendy band. You, on the other hand, can witness this band and free up your mind!

AW: I guess I should have you guys introduce yourselves.

RC: Ray Chin - drums.

TF: Tony Fate - guitar.

BV: Bob Vennum - bass.

LK: Lisa Kekaula - vocals.

AW: I wanted to get some info on your background. I know you’ve been around for awhile, but you haven’t always been the same people, right?

LK: Bob and I started it.

BV: Yeah, Lisa and I, in ‘90. It wasn’t anything like this. It was more soul-pop oriented.

AW: Tony sent me that tape from—was it the first or second one?

TF: Yeah, the second one.



by Alan Wright

RC: “In The Light of the Sun.”

BV: You weren’t in the band, though?

TF: No, but I played bass on that album.

BV: I was playing guitar until Tony took it over. (everyone laughs) The Bellrays were trying to get a harder sound, and a groovier sound, and we couldn’t find a bass player to do it. I’ve known

Tony for a long time, he’d played bass and filled in with our band, and I’d played bass and filled in with his bands. The confluence of energies just kind of crossed over. We needed people and he needed people, so we just joined up.

AW: Did you play with his band the Grey Spikes, too?

BV: Yeah, I filled in on a few occasions. There was a point when Jeff broke his arm and I played a couple of shows.

RC: That earlier version of the Bellrays was also a five-piece, with the addition of keyboards, too.

AW: After I got “Let It Blast,” I pulled out the older tape to compare the two. The sound got a lot more amped-up!

BV: Yeah.

AW: So, people describe the band as “Aretha Franklin fronting the MC5.” Is that an apt description?

BV: It’s as good as anything, I guess. A lot of people just pick whatever singer they happen to think and go “Oh, it sounds like that.” We have that sort of sound going on.

TF: It’s a starting point for them to describe, but after that they get sort of lost.

RC: I think it’s used as kind of a teaser to get people to just come and listen because there really isn’t anything you can use to describe it. I’m sick of these labels, and people trying to say “What do you sound like?” There used to be a time you’d go out and see a band and then decide, you know, whether you like it or not, it was just all rock and roll. I think one of those descriptions we actually penned ourselves, just because people said

we needed to describe what we sounded like. I don't think there is anything that sounds like what we're doing.

AW: That's what really blew me away, because I am a big soul fan, as well as a punk fan, and somebody got this idea together.

TF: I am too, and I kept wondering why nobody ever did that.

RC: Tony and I talked about that a bunch of times, it seemed like it would be the natural progression for us. It would go that way because that's the way things had been going up until, well, the Stooges were doing it that way, I think. They were taking it from a soul vein, but when you hear bands say they're inspired by the Stooges it's like the soul has just been eliminated. That whole aspect has been snatched out of it, and I really don't see where it went.

AW: I know a lot of people who like the MC5 but don't investigate the whole influence of free jazz, like Sun Ra, Pharoah Saunders, Coltrane.

All: Yeah, yeah!!

one of the supreme rock singers. She was not a soul singer per se to me, she was a hard rock

singer, in the same style as Roger Daltrey or Little Richard or Johnny Rotten.

RC: Soul is added for one reason—'cause



Lisa's black. (more laughing)

AW: The first time I put on your CD I played it for my wife and she said "Wow, this is really cool. She kinda sounds like the singer from AC/DC."

LK: That's great! I love that!

TF: I've heard two people say that at a show, "Hey, you guys are like AC/DC!"

RC: Not to qualify it any further than that, but

TF: You know, the whole problem with some punk rock is that it degenerated into just styles and clearly defined rules. I really thought it would branch out into something more explosive, but it didn't. It ultimately failed, so here we are in 1999 trying to reinvent the wheel.

Create a clever ad campaign for heroin or rat poison on TV, and watch what happens. "Got rat poison?" You'll start seeing that everywhere.

investigate that, and they don't investigate the fact that they were influenced by the Detroit soul scene and James Brown, because that stuff is hard to imitate. Most of what passes for rock and roll music now is just cheap imitation. There's not a lot of innovation. If there is, it's usually in the hands of really noisy groups that don't really know how to kick ass. They know how to make a lot of noise, and how to contain an abstract idea, but they can't branch out into a catchy three-minute song.

LK: Or be heavy. That seems to be a real problem, too, for bands to be heavy, and that's something that we're consciously trying to be a part of.

TF: When they say we sound like "Tina Turner singing with the MC5," to me Tina Turner was

that's cool. That is!

AW: So, getting back to like the free-jazz of the Stooges...

TF: Well, you know in the '60s all that kind of stuff converged. When you listen to Cream and the Who and the MC5 and some of those kind of bands that combined jazz rhythms with rock music, but then it got completely forgotten by the mid-70s, where they're just jamming on "E" or some boogie progression.

BV: Tony, didn't you say you heard that Miles Davis once hooked up with Keith Moon?

TF: I read this story that Miles Davis, Keith Moon, and John Entwistle were going to start a band.

RC: That's a statement of how open things were then. In today's world, you don't really see jazz musicians getting together with rock musicians.

LK: I think a lot of the reasons that we... I mean Ray brought up that it was freer in that time to explore. Not to totally rag on anybody or to say that they didn't have shitty musicians back then, but everything's been so dumbed down and there are many people that are in the mix that really shouldn't be, including the bean-counters and people putting money into this stuff and keeping it dumbed-down. Not to mention

a lot of people who think that they're out there playing rock and roll music when they're doing nothing but getting on somebody's

nerves. And people don't have enough sense

-Bob Vennum

to know better, people aren't primed to just say "this sounds like shit" or "I don't like this." I think it's all connected to that.

BV: They're limited to choices, too. As people are making more money, they start going after that niche or market, and there's less opportunity for people to listen to stuff on the radio. That's why you get all these small clubs and live music out there.

LK: Radio's bought, I mean, I don't know anybody who really listens to the radio.

BV: I listen to NPR and that's about it.

LK: It's because they're dissatisfied, and that tells me that if you're dissatisfied with what's on the radio, then who's buying all those

records?

AW: I just finished reading a great book called "Confessions of a Record Producer" by Moses Avalon, and it's frightening. It's amazing the shit that happens in the recording industry.

TF: I know that thousands of little girls turn out to see the Spice Girls, but I can't believe that they're actually buying the records.

LK: Their parents do seem to go for those kind of things, probably more than for the other shit that's on the radio. Those things, anything that attracts the pre-teen age group, I can see...I mean, having a little daughter of my own, I know that they're just little mind-bots waiting to just do whatever.

BV: I can't see John Mellencamp selling any more than 2,000 records, or any of these whiz-bang 17-year-old blues freaks.

LK: Kenny Wayne, John Sheppard...

BV: Nobody buys those records.

AW: Have you heard that group B*witched? I watched something on the Disney channel a while ago, and there's no way they are playing live. All those guys were behind them, I was watching them, and I was wondering, "what are these guys doing standing around on stage pretending to play a horn when it's not even a horn!?!?" (much guffaws) It was bizarre, this pre-packaged, lipsynched...

LK: It's funny that you bring that up, because they had this fiddle player, and he did not look like he was playing fiddle...it was like he didn't even know that instrument.

AW: I figure they just pick these guys up somewhere and go "okay, you're going to be the fiddle player, he's the bassist, and you, you'll be the drummer", even though there is no way those are real drums. They don't even sound like drums.

BV: It's as if they called the local actors union and said "Okay, we need a band." Then these guys show up.

AW: I wonder what's going through their minds. Do they really think that the kids are so stupid that they're not going to recognize that this is just four girls on stage pretending with no real backing musicians?.

RC: It's all about the image, because kids at that young an age can be easily influenced by so many things.

AW: That kind of gets back to what Lisa was saying about substance in music, and that's my main criticism of bands. With some bands, there's just not a whole lot of substance to them. They're just up there doing it because, well...

LK: Because bands with funny hats and stupid logos are now considered hip...

BV: At some point the ad guys took over, and

they just thought they could sell anything to anybody simply because they came up with a good ad campaign. The reason they could get away with it is because people started paying attention to the ad campaign and reacting to the ad campaign instead of what they were actually selling. Create a clever ad campaign for heroin or rat poison on TV, and watch what happens. "Got rat poison?" You'll start seeing that everywhere.

TF: In a few years, you know how the generations switch over so fast, there's going to be a big backlash. You're going to meet people that wouldn't be caught dead wearing something that says "Nike" on the front. There'll be a big 'ol backlash, 'cause they're not going to want to be like their older brothers or their parents, and that's going to be cool. They're going to hate everything!

BV: It's already happening. A lot of major record labels are having a hard time because people just aren't buying their products anymore. That's why I said that nowadays no one is buying John Mellencamp records. The record company that owns him is going under. If the public was buying ten million of his records that same record company should be doing quite well, since they'd be getting 90% of that amount.

AW: Seagrams owns everything now anyway.



TF: That's why we put out our own records.
 HL: Tony, you've been doing that for awhile, too.
 TF: Yup, and we'll continue to do it. It's called "D.I.O."—Do It Ourselves! I'm old enough to remember back in 1977 when somebody told you about a band called the Damned or something. Even if you'd never heard of the Damned before, you had to go to some record store in the middle of nowhere to find this record. You couldn't just go next door to your friend's house and listen to it because your friend didn't listen to it.
 BV: Yeah, you couldn't visit someone and say "can I listen to your Damned album?", because they'd look at you like you were fucking crazy!
 AW: It sure wasn't like having a Led Zeppelin record!
 TF: You had to actually go and seek cool

they actually thought "Smash It Up" was an Offspring song. I'm like "No, no, no, it's a much better song in its original form."
 BC: Or kids that think that the MC5's "Kick Out The Jams" is a Monster Magnet song!
 BV: Or that any of the blues songs that Eric Clapton does are actually his, like "I'm Down" or whatever other song he fucks up on an album.
 AW: I was the kind of person that picked up a Yardbirds record and went "geez, they only wrote like three songs on here, all these other songs are by some other guys." I'd ask older people that were into the blues, and they'd roll their eyes and say "oh, that's a Muddy Waters song" or whatever.
 BV: Yeah, almost everybody's done a Willie Dixon song, for example. So if you hear the originals, you'll think "oh, there's that song that Zeppelin did, or that Foghat did."

grew up listening to Stevie Wonder and a lot of the Billie Holliday and the older jazz stuff, where you had killer songwriters. I think the songs that Tony and Bob write have the same kind of depth, so I don't have any problem with that. I haven't heard any bad stuff yet.
 TF: It's kind of hard writing really personal lyrics for another singer, so you have to be able to step away from your lyrics just a little bit. Sometimes that changes the character of the song...
 AW: There's that one song with the line "You say you're black like me...", and obviously you're not black.
 BV: It doesn't really have anything to do with being black...
 AW: But it could be interpreted that way.
 BV: A lot of people do interpret it like that because we have a black singer, but it doesn't really have anything to do with color.

I was working with a bunch of guys and they actually thought "Smash It Up" was an Offspring song. I'm like "No, no, no, it's a much better song in its original form."

records out, or at least catch some weird article in some magazine about them. Everything was rare and hard to find, and it was much more fun to have to hunt for it yourself. That's what these music fans today don't understand, since everything's just there for them to consume.

AW: I'm constantly amazed about how lazy and uninformed "rockers" are today. Maybe it's just because I'm such a rock and roll history junkie, the kind of guy that picked up the Damned album, heard "I Feel Alright", and went "who are the Stooges"? Then I went out and looked for a Stooges album. People who are a lot younger than me, they'll see some band onstage do a Damned song and they'll be think it's an original and say "That's a great song." Then I'll roll my eyes and say "that's a Damned song."

TF: I was working with a bunch of guys and

AW: Or, here's some songs that Zeppelin credited to themselves until Willie sued them! (lotsa laughing) So, getting back to you guys, who writes your songs?

TF: Me and Bob.

AW: You guys write the lyrics, everything?
 BV: Tony writes most of them, I write some. We each bring in the songs.

AW (to Lisa): Do you find it easy to sing somebody else's lyrics?

TF: In fact, nothing we do really has anything to do with color, but a lot of people try to make a big point out of that.

-Tony Fate

LK: The term soul is often misinterpreted. We ourselves say we play "maximum rock and soul", but usually these terms are used in such a way that they can only refer to color. That's the only reason



they're being brought up in connection with

LK: To me, I feel a connection to what they write. I mean, I grew up singing songs that I feel represented a high standard of music. I

us! I think a lot of people don't realize that they've been brainwashed to think that black is soul, whereas

white is rock. It's not really that way.

AW: There is plenty of black music that I don't think can be called "soul" at all. Or they'll automatically call something "R&B", even though it's really not.

LK: It's nothing like it.

TF: Merle Haggard is one of the greatest soul singers I've ever heard in my life.

AW: Plus, what about great white soul singers like Janis Joplin?

LK: Soul has nothing to do with color.

TF: It's always black and white, man, they always leave out everybody else.

AW: That's very true. You guys are obviously a "multi-racial" band.

RC: The racial aspect of our band is irrelevant.

TF: We're all American.

BV: We use the term "rock and soul", but it has no color connotation at all. Why should it?

AW: So, Lisa, I heard you do some jazz singing as well.

LK: Billie Holliday, Nina Simone...

BV: Now there's an example of someone who never went the commercial route.

LK: Anybody who went into the whole protest thing, whether they wanted to or not, was kind of blacklisted. She had to leave the country.

AW: She played here last summer, actually.

LK: She's wonderful, she's magnificent

AW: When I started listening to her I understood where the Animals got their influence from.

TF: Yeah, I wish more people would seek out the originals, instead of settling for tenth rate copies.

BV: I get the impression that people kind of settle for copies because they don't know where to find the originals. Hence they sometimes miss the ideals behind the original songs.

LK: We've done a couple of covers and our whole motto, and my approach as a singer, is not to copy what we've already heard. My whole thing is to make it sound like a Bellrays song.

RC: When Tony or Bob bring in a song, they pretty much lay out the format, but they leave grey areas and say "do whatever you do in that part."

TF: Well, you have to write for your musicians if you're a band that cares about musicianship. Take some of these pop-punk Bad Religion rip-off bands, I don't think a lot of those songwriters are coming up with a song and saying "well, here's a beat that our own drummer can really do well." They don't seem to challenge each other or play to their own talents. They're nothing more than cookie-cutter bands, know what I mean?



LK: I think that's a great point to make, because it's something that people seem to ignore in music. I tend to think they do it to us, too. We've been lucky to have some publications that seem really intelligent, and I hope yours is the same way. There's a lot that goes into the songwriting with this band, and this has a lot to do with why people like what they hear. They might attribute this solely to the fact that I'm a black female singer, but that's probably because they're taking a superficial approach. They look at the eye candy and just kind of go with that. They're not really letting themselves experience these great songs. That's why I'm doing what I'm doing. I'm only one quarter of a really good thing.

BV: And we don't just come up with a song, learn it, and throw it up on stage. We've got a lot of songs that we don't even play because we don't think we really do them well. We want to bring the song to life, not just get up there and hash it out because we wrote it.

TF: The thing Lisa was getting at is that a lot of writers have been spotlighting her and ignoring the rest of the band or downplaying what we do, so we're trying to make sure that other writers don't do that.

LK: Even if they don't mean to, sometimes

they come across that way.

BV: It's a reflection on the writers themselves, not on us.

AW: Well, it goes back to what Tony was saying. I think a lot of writers are lazy, and a lot of them are bad. I hate to single anyone out, but I think *Maximumrocknroll* provides a good example of this. They have a lot of stupid people writing for them now who don't know much about the history of music, including the history of rock and roll. Plus, they have fucked-up political attitudes that end up making them look like hypocrites, and the writing is often just plain bad.

TF: Well, I've read your stuff, so when I found out you were doing this interview I was relieved.

LK: Unfortunately, people don't know how to decide for themselves what is good and what is bad. Whatever sources they might have latched onto to do their thinking for them, they don't use their own ears to make up their minds. Or to listen to music without categorizing it, and then just decide whether or not they like it. You don't have to fit something into an absurd category like "black-soul-punk-country". Fuck that! You either like it or you don't.

BV: If you've gotta use more than four distinct musical labels to describe a single band, I

mean, what good does that do?

TF: We're at a point in time where it's become harder and harder to delineate styles of music. In 1964 if you said "we're like the Beatles," well you could be like the Beatles and everyone would know what you meant. By 1966 if you said that same thing, well...which kind of Beatles are you like? So it's become more and more difficult to attach restrictive labels to styles of pop music, which is a good thing.

AW: For example, a lot of people I know like the Stooges and the MC5, but when you bring up soul or jazz they go "I hate that self-indulgent shit." Whenever you're playing music you're doing it for yourself, aren't you, so it's always a little self-indulgent. These people

should jam a little or do something out of the ordinary—just so that I could hear their mistakes!

LK: People sometimes complain about the sound of our recording, "oh, it's got all this hiss, and it's got all this other shit going on..." And you know what I got to say to them? "Fuck off!" Our record sounds like we did it when we recorded it, like we did when we played those songs, and we cared a lot more about those songs than we did about putting ourselves in debt to get a clean sound in order to satisfy other people.

BC: For everyone who has told us that the quality could be better, I think we've gotten two responses that said our record was the

RC: Those people are seeing the Bellray element that they want to take and market. That's it.

AW: The first thing I heard of the current band was that split record with Adam West, where you do the Saints cover.

BC: That's our very first recording...

LK: The first practice and the first recording.

BC: We learned that song in an hour.

LK: It was supposed to be a Grey Spikes release, and that's how the new Bellrays were born. I really like that recording.

AW: I heard that and immediately e-mailed you and asked how much the CD was. Then I sent you the money the next day!

BC: Put that in your article. The Bellrays will

respect you or any writer who says "Hey, let me buy a copy of

Ask Wayne Kramer what he was doing it for. For the "sex, drugs, and rock and roll", man!

that say they're just "doing it for the kids" are either fools or liars.

LK: Ask Wayne Kramer what he was doing it for. For the "sex, drugs, and rock and roll", man!

TF: There's one aspect of exciting of rock music that a lot of bands have totally forgotten about. What was punk rock originally all about? Challenging yourself and challenging the audience. It has totally degenerated into this whole stupid aesthetic where you don't have to know how to play, just make a bunch of noise and go "blah, blah, blah"! You've gotta challenge yourself on some level. I don't care how well you know how to play, but you've gotta challenge yourself.

LK: That rings true not just for the whole punk rock ideal, but even more for every bit of music I'm hearing in the mainstream today, whether they call it "punk", rock, rap, country, or jazz. There's rarely any challenge to any of it. What's the point of playing concerts if you're just going to play exactly what you already played on your CD? You need to take it further than that.

RC: I think we're going after a more mature audience, because our music isn't always easy to listen to. You even said yourself that you had to listen to it a few times, but if you get it in the end, gosh, it feels pretty good. If you don't, that's fine too.

BV: I mean, I'd feel cheated if I spent \$17 on a CD and then went to see a band live, and all they did was sound exactly like they did on their CD. I'd be mad. If nothing else they

freshes thing they've heard.

AW: You recorded it totally live, right? I mean, is it all one set, or did you edit it?

BV: It was recorded over a period of time, and it was set up in a practice room, and we took what we considered to be the best versions of the songs. It has nothing to do with the technology, it has to do with the band and the people in it and what they're playing. If we'd had access to better equipment, of course it would've sounded better. We didn't make a conscious effort to get the shittiest equipment we could find, or to make it sound hiss, like garage bands often do.

LK: If we'd owned better equipment, as opposed to using some that someone else had provided for us, it would have sounded different. But we weren't going to "slit our wrists" to make it sound "professional".

TF: Some of the very same people who said they didn't think our record sounded very good" have copies of Iggy's "I Got A Right" or a live MC5 show recorded on scotch tape that they paid \$50 for, and you don't hear them complaining about the sound quality on those! But they don't like the way our record was recorded.

LK: Or they can't wait to clean us up. I don't really have time for that attitude, since it tells me that they don't really see what it is that they think they see. They actually think that they do see what's going on, but they really don't. They don't realize that we don't want an overproduced sound. We're coming up against that already.

your CD." Then they'll realize we're doing it on our own and that this isn't credit heaven.

Anybody out there that wants some respect

-Lisa Kekaula

from the Bellrays...now you know what to do!

LK: We sell them cheap enough so that anybody can afford a copy, but we've had record executives call us up that don't want to fork out 10 bucks. They'd rather go spend 50 bucks on dinner for us than buy the damn CD!

BC: And that goes against the whole mainstream way of business, because people are saying that "the Bellrays are closing the doors." But I think the doors will open if we get the music out there.

LK: If that's enough to close the doors, what kind of horrible business are we in? ⊕

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vitalgesture@hotmail.com

BELLRAYS DISCOGRAPHY

"The Bellrays" cassette, 1993 (T-Dog)
"In The Light Of The Sun", 1994 (Vital Gesture)
"Wall Of Soul" 7" EP, 1993 (Vital Gesture)
"Let It Blast" split 7" w/Adam West, 1999 (Vital Gesture/Fandango)
"Let It Blast" CD, 1999
plus appearances on "Over The Wire" CD (909) and "A Vital Gesture Xmas" (Vital Gesture)

Screeching Weasel, Pinhead Gunpowder, Less Than Jake, Queers, Teen Idols, Common Rider, Lillingtons, NOFX, Riverdales, Mr. T Experience, Propagandhi, Operation Ivy, Rancid, Vindictives, Lagwagon, Discount, Minor Threat, Mopes, 88 Fingers Louie, Angry Samoans, Fyp, Jon Cougar Concentration, Limp, No Use For A Name, Nobodys, Parasites, 7 Seconds, Anti-Flag, Bollweevils, Citizen Fish, Moral Crux, Alaris, Dropkick Murphys, Groovie Ghoules, A1, Blink 182, Donnas, Dr. Frank, Against All Authority, Fifteen, J. Church, Crimpshrine, Dillinger Four, Dwarves, Sloppy Seconds, Squirtgun, Strung Out, Subhumans, Ten Foot Pole, Alkaline Trio, Automa-

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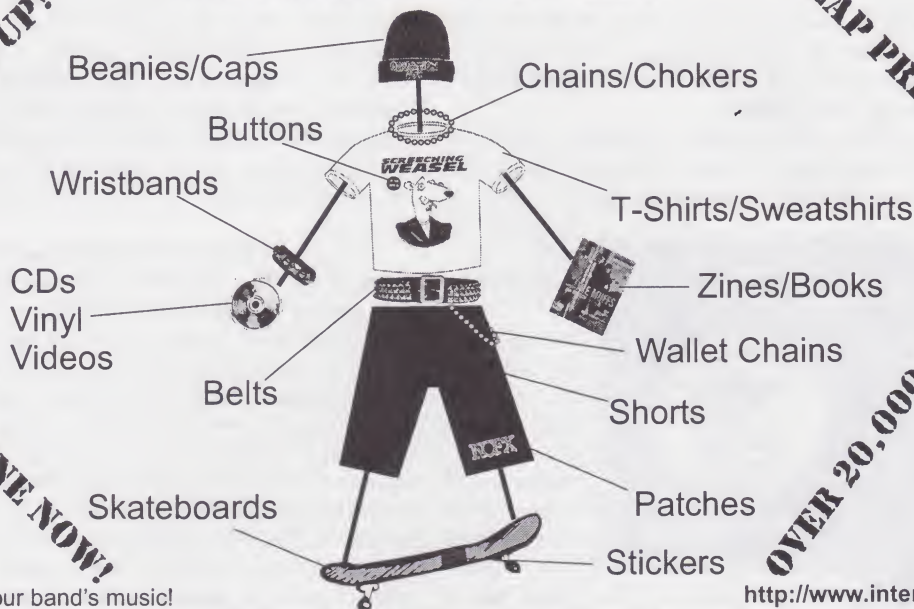
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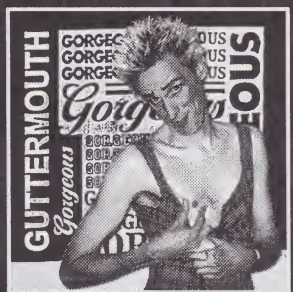
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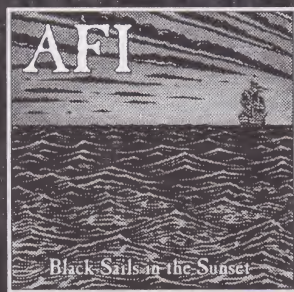
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ARE YOU READY FOR THE COUNTRY?

You know, I would NEVER shortchange all you readers out there by plopping my ass down in front of my Mac to bang out this column UNPREPARED. MMmmm...mmMMMM.

YOU WANNA KNOW HOW PREPARED I AM? I've got a couple of ice cold cans of Millers, a couple of Pabst blue ribbons, and even a couple of jewel-like green bottles of

Molson's all lined up in a pretty row to my left. Downstairs my refrigerator bulgeth with lots more guzzleable's. Just to the right of my mousepad is a mostly

full half gallon of JIM BEAM and a shotglass with lettering that reads

"DERN TOOTIN' I'M A REBEL!". It's 3:00 AM, the house is quiet. The phone has stopped ringing for a few hours. I anticipate NO interruptions.

SEE HOW PREPARED I AM? I go to great lengths to make sure that I can coax a truthful, enlightening, and entertaining column out of my brain for you. If I sat in front of this screen sipping Ovaltine at 11:00 AM while trying to function as the divining rod of truth for this magazine that I surely am, I would fail fucking miserably.

Now it's time for you readers who want to

be educated, titillated even, to meet me halfway by preparing YOURSELVES. The subject of this particular column is one that is considered "taboo" by a helluva lot of you. I don't stand to gain by prying open your mind—YOU DO. I'm doing you all a favor by sharing my knowledge with you. So, it's in YOUR best interest to find a bottle to lubricate your brain with so that your mind is OPEN WIDE. If you don't drink, well...reload your bong or your crack pipe or grab whatever else is handy.

Ready? OK, proceed.

One of the reasons that I'm proud to be associated with Hit List is the fact that the editors have accumulated columnists and contributors that in many cases REALLY know their fucking shit about specific genres of rock and roll. I'll give you a "for instance".

Personally, I'm not exactly enamored with Brit-pop or 60's psych, but it's great to know that those genres are covered by KNOWLEDGE-ABLE authorities, in contrast to all the crappy music zines out there that appoint writers who are primarily concerned with a) giving record labels plugs so that they can get free records, or b) plugging their own or their friends' projects. I can't even read local music weeklies anymore. I get TOO FUCKING PISSSED OFF. Local music weeklies are—WITHOUT EXCEPTION—the product of self-serving scene gossips. WEEK AFTER WEEK AFTER WEEK there's the same old boring gossip about which local bands might "get signed". I've been watching creeps trowel out that kinda horseshit for 20 fucking years now.

I hereby challenge ANY motherfucking weekly music scenester paper in the US to send me a copy of their worthless fucking rag if they want to test me; if they add return postage, I'll gladly take a red pen and circle all of the self-serving, ass-kissing, "support our happy scene" horseshit. Then I'll wipe my fucking ass with it and send it back for them to study. ANY TAKERS OUT THERE?

Anyway, I'm getting sidetracked a bit.

The reason why I'm bragging about the merits of the rock and roll scholars that you can read in this mag, like Jeff Dahl or Jack Rabid, is because the time has come for me to appoint myself as the head honcho of COUNTRY MUSIC that you'll read in these pages.

First, let me say this—I didn't really WANT IT to be this way. When I agreed to write a column for issue #1, I expected that out of the galaxy of opinionated assholes who were contributing there must be SOMEBODY on board who was knowledgeable about one of my favorite types of music: COUNTRY. If there is, they've been keeping

their knowledge secret. I couldn't help but notice that in issue #3 a couple of columnists touched upon country music in an incomplete manner. The consensus opinion seemed to be that "GARTH BROOKS sucks...therefore, all country sucks".

Unfortunately, that is an asinine proposition.

"TOM PETTY sucks...therefore, all rock and roll sucks..."

"The RED ROCKERS sucked...therefore, all early 80's punk rock sucks..."

"60's psych and garage bands all sound like the BEATLES"...

Get the idea? All those statements are preposterous.

Here's another preposterous statement.

"My parents were into country...therefore, it all sucks!". STOP! Now's the time to take another bong hit or crack open another beer. Take a minute and think back how many times you've heard somebody run down country music because one of their shithead relatives listens to it.

Thee Whiskey Rebel will bet you a pint of EARLY TIMES that that shithead relative only listens to the very worst country music. I am not here to defend the likes of Barf Brooks...or 99.9% of the slick, over-produced country you hear on the radio...anymore than YOU, AS A TRUE ROCK AND ROLL FAN, would defend Tom Petty or Billy



If I sat in front of this screen sipping Ovaltine at 11:00 AM while trying to function as the divining rod of truth for this magazine that I surely am, I would fail fucking miserably.

Joel or the worthless, cocksucking Ben Folds Five. And as for older, "classic" country music, I have NO USE AT ALL for boring artists like Ronnie Milsap, Barbara Mandrell, Kenny Rogers, or Crystal Gale. The group ALABAMA makes me fucking PUKE!

The sad fact is that whether you're dealing with punk singles from the 70s, or obscure mid-60's garage bands or what I would call great country music, it's DAMN HARD TO FIND THE GOOD STUFF...and I CAN GUARANTEE THAT YOU'RE NOT VERY DAMNED LIKELY TO FIND IT LISTENING TO AMERICAN RADIO.

If I was a kid growing up these days and was forced to hear the fucking OFFSPRING or fucking KORN on the radio, and people were calling that stuff "punk rock", I'd FUCKING HATE punk rock. If I heard NO DOUBT on the radio, and they had a rep as a ska band, I would assume that ALL ska sucks. If I saw ROB ZOMBIE on MTV and then saw a picture of ANTISEEN, I would assume that their singer had stolen his "look" from Rob.

Mainstream music is for mainstream people. Mainstream people don't really FUCKING CARE what they're listening to. They have other, MORE IMPORTANT things to think about, like their jobs and their monthly credit card payments. Or maybe trimming their toenails. Music just isn't that fucking important to most people. The music you hear on the radio is not programmed for FANATICS like you and me and Jeff Bale. It is programmed for casual listeners. Why is that? C'mon, you damn well know the answer. There's 50,000 of them for every one of us. Listeners who want MORE, who want the REAL SHIT, need to hook up with a knowledgeable FANATIC friend or a magazine like this in order to educate themselves.

The most savvy music fanatics that I know try to locate the VERY BEST SHIT from SEVERAL DIFFERENT GENRES so they can MAXIMIZE THEIR FUN. After all, WHY LIMIT YOURSELF? Just last week

WHISKEYREBEL

a good friend of the late G.G. ALLIN told me that G.G. was a big fan of GRAND FUNK RAILROAD and the BAY CITY ROLLERS, and I already knew that he was really into country. See what I mean? G.G. was smart, he didn't limit himself. SO WHY SHOULD YOU?

My wife posted several pieces that I've written on our webpage about a year ago. BY FAR the biggest response we've gotten has been to a rudimentary "Country Music 101" article I wrote for a zine that we published. So I know from personal experience that a lot of you are curious about country music. That's why I'm going to appoint myself as the country guru for this mag until somebody that REALLY knows country (like Nick Tosches or Jeremy Tepper from "Diesel only" records) climbs on board.

I imagine that a few of you rock and roll purists are already snivelling and pouting. Need I remind you that rock and roll wouldn't exist in its present form if it weren't for COUNTRY MUSIC? I'm not asking you to scrap your KISS albums—I'm trying to expose you to something new out of the goodness of my heart so that you don't have to play the same 50 albums over and over for the rest of your fucking life.

First off, I'm gonna turn you readers on to some older country artists with HUGE catalogs of albums that you can go dig up, often for about a dollar apiece. I suggest you try flea markets, garage sales, and record store dollar bins to find albums by these people. I've amassed a HUMONGOUS collection that way. Also, it's the best way to try out some of the artists that you're unsure of. The responses I've gotten from our webpage make it clear that EVERYBODY likes Johnny Cash already, so I'm not going to lecture about him. A lot of

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HIT SQUAD

C.O.S. fans that write to me evidently have heard that some of our bands listen to country music, and then they've gone out and bought David Allan Coe albums. That's a wise move. But DON'T STOP THERE, TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL!

All you doubters out there who are still reading along may have the impression that country music is for conservative and squeaky clean "squares". Think again! On the whole, the artists that I really enjoy are a crew that, when it comes to hellraising, could match up with Keith Richards, Darby Crash, and Sid. Over the years, George Jones drank and pill and snorted himself into an insane mental state to the point where he had split-personality conversations OUT LOUD with himself...he even talked in a duck voice! He also once tried to rip fellow country legend Porter Wagoner's penis off backstage at the Grand Ol' Opry in a drunken rage! Johnny Paycheck is a feral-eyed fellow who, in between several successful recording stints dating back to the 60s, has spent many years in prison for committing violent crimes. Red Foley, who used to record a lot of gospel tunes, was arrested and thrown in the drunk tank on a regular basis. Once when the cops were emptying out his pockets to toss him in the drunk tank, they had no idea that they were arresting the leading country singer of his time until they found tens of

thousands of dollars in his pockets. Johnny Cash and Hank Jr. partied together for weeks at a time in the California desert, popping pills and driving vehicles at deadly speeds. Merle Haggard turned 21 in prison, and made it to death row soon after. Dotty West was a notorious nymphomaniac who, in her 50's, was screwing her way through the boys in her band who were less than half her age. Ernest Tubbs was an alcoholic pill popper. Lefty Frizzell was a hardcore alcoholic suffering from chronic depression. The "coal miner's daughter" Loretta Lynn almost pill herself into oblivion. And how 'bout those "outlaws"? Waylon Jennings rarely drank alcohol, but he nonetheless enjoyed a 20-year long pill and cocaine binge. Willie Nelson is still a notorious pothead in his late 60's...I once heard Howard Stern comment that Willie smoked more pot than anybody he had ever seen in his life! One of Willie's wives once got pissed off at his philandering, so she sewed him up inside his bedsheets while he was sleeping. Then she proceeded to beat the hell out of the poor defenseless crooner.

For as many years that these country stars were more or less publicly pilling and fucking and boozing and fighting, their fans NEVER TURNED on them. They could identify with singers that enjoyed a good time just like them.

I'll bet the "pretty boy" country studs that get all the airplay today don't live wild, hell-raising lives like the old timers did. Maybe that's part of the reason that their music is so soul-less and namby-pamby. Their songs seem to me to be mostly peaceful, happy little ditties that celebrate the joys of rural domestic tranquility in the 90s. The old-

timers did things VERY differently. In the 60s, Porter Wagoner recorded a TRILOGY of albums of drinking songs. He also recorded a number of songs that exploited "insanity" (the "Rubber Room" is his best), and an entire album of prison songs. He then discovered a prolific young songwriter named Dolly Parton in the late 60s. The youthful Dolly had a knack for writing tragic "dead child" exploitation songs that are unfortunately mostly forgotten today; go back and look on her first several years' worth of albums and you will find at least one of these morbid gems per album!

Until the mid-80s or so, it wasn't absolutely necessary that a country recording artist be movie-star handsome. Case in point: RED SOVINE. The late Mr. Sovine looked more like a peepshow janitor than a bigtime recording artist! In fact he was butt ugly, but that didn't prevent him from having a long career studded with hits. Red was the absolute master of the "spoken word narrative", a country sub-genre that made hits out of some mighty bizarre concepts. One of his

most famous was "Phantom 309", the bizarre tale of a hitchhiker who was given a lift by a trucker who'd been dead for years. In "Little Rosa" he used an insulting, awful Italian accent to bring authenticity to a weepy story involving an old Italian man and flowers for a grave. "The Prettiest Dress" was a narrative wherein Red is picking out a dress to bury his dead wife in, while "Teddy Bear" was the story of a crippled boy whose trucker Dad had recently died. And then there's the "Intoxicated Rat", a much more sophisticated narrative wherein Red was staggering around drunk and feeding gin to a goddamned

rat. I'm not making any of this up!

When the aforementioned ex-convict Johnny Paycheck was released from prison in the mid-60s, he entered into an artist-manager relationship with a fellow named Aubrey Mayhew, who owned an independent label named Lil Darlin'. During the rest of the 60s Mayhew's label churned out single after single of Johnny's bitter, vengeful, booze- and adultery-obsessed tunes. Here are some sample titles: "He's in a hurry to get home to my wife", "It's a mighty thin line between love and hate", "It won't be long and I'll be hating you", "If I'm gonna sink I may as well go to the bottom", and the classic "Pardon me...I've got someone to kill". An excellent collection of his music from this period was reissued on CD in 1998 ("The Real Mr. Heartache"). For those of you that enjoy Johnny Cash or David Allan Coe, this Paycheck CD is a MUST. Of course, there's NO FUCKING WAY that the majors would allow the likes of a Johnny Paycheck a chance today unless he agreed to "clean up his act".

One of the best subgenres of country that USED to exist was "truckdriving music", which very often featured HEAVY REVERB and FUZZ-drenched electric guitars that sounded like they would fit well on psych punk records from the same period. Indeed, I know of a couple "psych" collectors who avidly collect the records of Dave Dudley, Kaye Adams, Dick Curlless, and others—for the sheer joy of hearing fuzzed-out guitars in another setting. Truckdriving songs were for the most part very uptempo and energetic, so it's very easy to get into once you've overcome the traditional hippie mentality that renders country music "taboo".

XXXXXX

I don't want to overstate my case here. I'll admit that perhaps 50% of the country music recorded in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s was disposable "love song" fluff that puts ME to sleep. The key is to locate songs that dwell on adultery, booze, and morbid or bizarre behavior. This is actually fairly easy to do, since 95% of the time you can tell by the song titles listed on the back of the album whether you're holding in your hand a collection of love ditties or not. Jim Ed Brown ("Pop-a-Top", "Little Ole Wine Drinker Me", and "Pop-a-Top Again") must have recorded fifty albums between the 50s and the 70s. Most of 'em are love song collections, but there are a couple that concentrate on seamier subjects that are well worth locating. Hank Thompson recorded many albums of lighthearted "dance" numbers that steered clear of the bottle. But he ALSO recorded albums that are chock full of great songs like "Six Pack to Go", "Hangover Tavern", and an anti-hippie song entitled "Ace in the Hole" that Jello turned me onto years ago.

In issue #3 Vic Bondi briefly discussed the fact that many of us are anxiously awaiting the "next big thing" in rock and roll. Well, it sure didn't happen this year. In the world of country, however, it's been a damn big year. The best CD of the year, as far as I'm concerned, was released as an advanced promo a few weeks ago by the great WAYNE HANCOCK. Wayne not only has the best voice in country music to come along in thirty or so years, he's also been waging a one-man war with the "powers that be" in Nashville for a few years now. I've been told about T-shirts Wayne was selling on the road that featured his face on a locomotive and the words "WAYNE HANCOCK...FUCK NASHVILLE!"

Wayne Hancock is not like all these swing music trendies that look great in their expensive suits but can't back it up with chops. His band doesn't put on a fashion show. The material ranges from occasional uptempo hickabilly to more frequent "walking" tempo songs. To my knowledge, during the last quarter century there's never been a country act that came closer to matching the gritty, moody feel of old Hank Williams Sr. and Webb Pierce records. Wayne can croon a carbon copy impression of old Hank that is closer than that of anyone else I've ever heard, including Hank Jr. when he was young. Perhaps more importantly, Wayne realizes that he is WAYNE and not Hank. He only turns on the Hank voice occasionally.

I'm not sure what the street date is for the release of the new Wayne Hancock CD. In the meantime, I suggest that you pick up a copy of his 1998 release, "That's what Daddy Wants". The title track is an uptempo early 50's-style rock and roll tune, with a raucous trumpet wailing in the background for good measure. "87 Southbound" is a perfect example of his trademark "walking tempo" songs. A catchy melody churns along led by a peppy accordion, while Wayne sings about walking down route 87 away from the clutches of a gal he just left. Perhaps the greatest song on this disc is "Highway 54", a masterpiece of tragic country-justice wherein Wayne's gal winds up in a deadly carwreck in the vehicle of another man, who—it turns out—was poor ol' Wayne's "best friend". As far as Thee Whiskey Rebel is concerned, Wayne Hancock provides the same kind of kick in the ass to country music that the Dead Boys provided to rock and roll in their heyday. The "next big thing" in Country is ALREADY here.



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Since the mid 80s members of The Rat Bastards have been playing in hard-core bands. Then over 8 years ago The Rat Bastards were formed. Ever since that very day The Rat Bastards have been playing some of the best hard-core ever. So after a 7" on Will E. Survive Records, a split 7" with Dead Drunk on Will E. Survive Records, as well as a 7" on our label Beer City (and yes its out of print) we all decided to put out a long overdue full length for The Rat Bastards. What this CD contains is 18 songs by these Chicago boys. 13 of the songs are brand new. Then there are 5 bonus tracks off of their 7"! This full length was recorded at Attica in Chicago by Chuck Uchida. Then mastered here in Milwaukee at Walls Have Ears by Bill Stace (Bill records all kinds of punk bands, including all the U.S. Bombs stuff on Beer City). Not to forget Chuck (who has been recording for over eight years now and did all of Los Cruados' recordings) so to make a long story short get this CD and you will be very stoked!

Finally it is out! For those of you who haven't seen or heard Brass Tacks this is what they sound like. Good ol' skinhead rock n roll with influences by AC/DC, Ross Tattoo and various punk bands. They belt out 14 songs that are unforgettable on this cd. Brass Tacks has been around for almost four years and was on a Helen of Oi comp and they also were on a 7" comp put out by American Upstart zine.

Remember Monster Truck Driver? That was a band we did a 7" for a few years back. Well Monster Truck Driver broke up, but Jay from said band refused to give up and formed 'The Undisputed Heavyweight Champions'. Much like Monster Truck Driver this new band is hardcore, but much faster and even more hardcore than 'Monster Truck Driver' was. In fact The undisputed Heavyweight Champions' are heavily influenced by the legendary Poison Idea! This cd will blow you away! Specially if you like real HARDCORE!!! Monster Truck Driver This germ 7" still available from us \$3.00 post paid in the USA; and \$5.00 post paid anywhere outside of the USA



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For six years now Milwaukee based killer traditional 70s style pun band Wanda Chrome and the leather Pharaohs has been playing out all over Wisconsin and other parts of the midwest. They have been to Europe five times and each time things have gotten bigger and better for them! They play some killer 70s style punk! Mix Iggy Pop, the Dead Boys and the New York Dolls and add some speed (No not the drug!) and you have Wanda Chrome and the Leather Pharaohs. This LP contains ten songs that were recorded live in the Beer City warehouse by Jeff Schaefer (360 Productions mobile studio unit) and this record sounds so killer you would think it was recorded in a fancy expensive studio! The cover of the LP was designed by Beer City's very own artist Von Munz. (That's the same guy who drew the art for the black eyes and broken bottles comp that also came out this month!) Plus to make this LP even better the cover is a gate fold (that means it opens like a book) and this record is on Red vinyl and comes with a printed sleeve!

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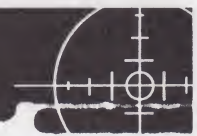


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HIT SQUAD



Here's another development that further illustrates the great impact Wayne Hancock is having on country music. Hank Williams III (he's Hank Sr's grandson and Hank Jr's son) recently "came of age" and decided to live up to the "family tradition" by recording a country album. Who did he look up to teach him how to T.C.B. like his Grandpa? Yep, Wayne the train. Hank the third's debut CD, which is entitled "Risn' Outlaw", is the result of his being schooled by playing as a member of Wayne's band for a while. There are a few standout tracks that prove that he has natural-born talent. One is his version of "Cocaine Blues" (a song recorded by Johnny Cash live at Folsom prison back in the 60s), but my favorite track was recorded by Hank III at home on a 4-track. It's a spooky sounding "sold my soul to Satan" tune entitled "Blue Devil". Hank also covers no less than three Wayne Hancock numbers.

Then there's a band that I had almost written off after they recorded what I thought was a misguided, overproduced debut album. BR-549 released a fantastic CD titled "Big Backyard Beat Show" in 1998. The disc opens with an energetic version of Buck Owens' "There Goes my Love", and winds down 13 songs later with "Georgia on a Fast Train". Along the way a few of my favorites are "You Flew the Coop" "Seven Nights to Rock", and "18 Wheels and a Crowbar". I'm not sure how they managed to record such a solid collection of uptempo, energetic songs under the noses of their label Arista. They plainly are a red hot

kickass band, and I hear they have a live CD out. I can't wait to get it. Another fantastic young country performer is DALE WATSON, son of the legendary GENE WATSON. I especially recommend Dale's "Truck Driving Songs" CD.

It wouldn't be right for me to leave out a couple of rock and roll bands that have been reviewed in these pages that combine the high energy and ear-splitting loud volume of rock with a heavy country inspiration. (By the way, I don't want to blow my credibility by misleading you. I admit that in the case of these two bands I have profited by selling a handful of their CDs through my mail order biz.) My C.O.S. cronies HELLSTOMPER have borrowed quite a bit from Grandpa Jones. Who's that, I hear some of you snickering. You probably fucking think that Grandpa Jones is just some sort of geriatric joke. Go locate a copy of Grandpa's King-Federal label "Greatest Hits" CD, which is loaded with tight, high octane tunes and a LOT of Southern attitude. Then there's San Francisco's most neglected band, HAMMERLOCK, who combine a loud rocking sound with a feisty Merle Haggard attitude. I might also add that neither of these bands gives a flying fuck about big city ways, punk rock politics, OR your opinions to the contrary.

FOR CHRIST'S FUCKING SAKE, don't take

this column wrong. I repeat: I'm not advocating that all you readers purge the punk rock, rock and roll, black metal, or WHATEVER THE HELL you're already listening to from your collections. I'm merely suggesting that a lot of you would benefit from finding yet ANOTHER genre of music to entertain yourselves with. Try to tailor the country albums you experiment with to your own existing tastes. For instance, over the years I've known several people who listen to JOY DIVISION back-to-back with the master of "morbid" country, George Jones. If you're into surf instrumentals, try listening to country guitar instrumental talents like Speedy West or Jimmy Bryant.

Well, I've tried my damndest. There's a heap of empty beer cans and bottles at my feet, and my jug of JIM BEAM has been brought down several inches. I know a lot of you will still refuse to pull the stick out of your ass that prevents you from listening to country music because you're content listening to the same tiny handful of MISFITS or KISS albums over and over and over. What the fuck...you could do a lot worse.

And I'm not saying that if you refuse to open your minds to what I've shared with you about country music, that that makes you a stupid ass. HELL NO! You were probably a stupid ass to begin with. ⊕

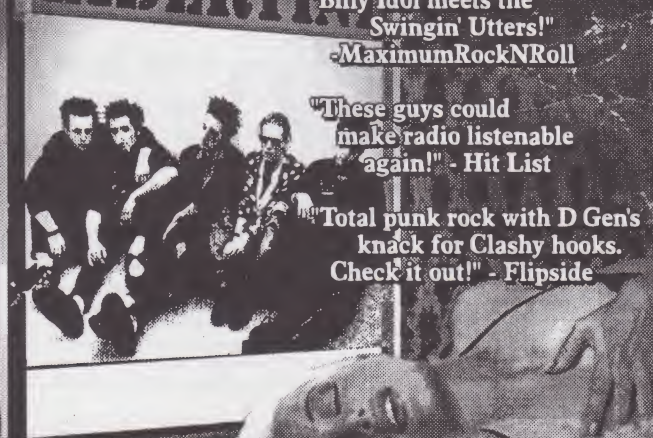
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LEATHERFACE

b y j a c k r a b i d

Seven years. It's a long time. It's the length of time that U.S. Leatherface fans have waited to see the Sunderland four live. Seven years since the Northern English knockouts' first release here, 1992's *Mush*, burned a hole through the speakers of those tuned in enough to take notice.

Remember that 12 month span after the release of Nirvana's *Nevermind*? The major labels here suddenly, bizarrely, were on the lookout for bands that could blow the roof off a building (after basically ignoring any such music for 15 years, in favor of limp synth-pop, rawk hair-bands, warmed-over soft metal, and other such rot). Atlantic offshoot Seed Records saw its chance at a cheap license, and grabbed the one-year-old *Mush* from a British indie, Roughneck/Fire, for the American market. And then...did nothing with it. No tour, no publicity blitz, no interviews. The most explosive band of the whole era, even more incendiary than Brett Gurewitz-era Bad Religion, found their CDs consigned to every used bin in the coun-

try, with an introductory "who?" price. No surprise then that the group's new English LP, *Minx*, wasn't even picked up by Seed.

But slowly word began to spread. So as soon as those CDs appeared in the \$5 bin, they were snapped up again. Whispers began of a powerhouse that could blow away every U.S. band then going—whispers of an ungodly passion in attack and vocals unknown outside of the hottest new band of the time, Sugar. The scuttlebutt said that the lyrics by remarkable singer Frankie N.W. Stubbs were also excellent, breaking with the norm of the day. The music might be sheer, unfettered, roaring and heavy, tight and quick punk rock, but the subject matter was often gut-wrenching, not so much hand-wringing emo-core as an emotional nerve cut open and oozing all over. As *Mush* began to be passed from one underground music fan to the next, before even the internet could assist them, the feeling was unanimous. "This is one band we would all die to see."

But it seemed like it was not to be. Seed

wouldn't bring the band over without some kind of fluke success to justify it, and without any radio and MTV play, that wasn't going to happen. Worse, the band itself was on the verge of collapse from internal disagreements, and called it splits in December 1993 in the midst of a final British tour. Somehow Stubbs and drummer Andrew Laing completed what became their final LP, *The Last*, a crowning achievement of a remarkable band. But the story was over. Or so it seemed.

But with bands this stunning, they never really die, do they? The clamor for more led to the reissues of their two earliest, formative, merely proficient LPs, 1989's *Cherry Knowle* and 1990's *Fill Your Boots*, and a whopping three posthumous live LPs that just confirmed again what a blitzkrieg group had been lost. Until the unthinkable happened. The band reformed in 1998, three-fourths intact. The rejuvenated band not only survived the eventual defection of one of the original members, key guitarist Dickie Hammond, but last month

they released a new recording, an only second-ever U.S. release (a split LP with Hot Water Music on BYO). They further shocked everyone by regaining all the crunch of their former days, with perhaps their most intense recording yet! Think of how few bands, even those who did fantastic reunion tours, have actually made LPs that compared favorably with venerated pre-breakup work?

And...most surprising of all...(ta da...) Leatherface toured the U.S. for the first time, opening for Hot Water Music all over our country in June. Night after night they garnered surprised encores and excited accolades, despite being the support band that caught most of the audience unprepared. "Finally," thought the rest, "The seven years of waiting and dreaming were worth it."

Lo and behold, here is 37-year-old Stubbs himself, sitting in his van in New Brunswick, New Jersey after a Spring afternoon nap, politely submitting to an interview. He knows what the first question is. How did the band's resurrection come about? It had seemed beyond any hope, given the public acrimony when Leatherface quit six years ago, as the singer/songwriter admits. "We sort of fell out three years before even then. It was purely down to [bassist] Andy [Crighton] that we

made it to then, even. Andy kept the band together for the three years, 'cause he just had that sort of personality, you know? Where he didn't actually fuel any sort of

beginning, that was all Dickie Hammond. Dickie went on at me for a year [starting in 1997], to get this thing going again. And then when we do, he leaves! That's a f***in'

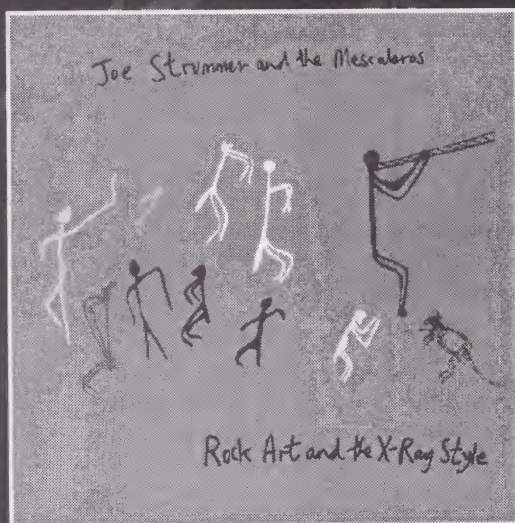
It was this huge conspiracy of people. Every time they saw me they would just say, 'Go on, do it. Just do one more gig for me!' For, like, his kid's birthday or something like this or whatever it was, his anniversary or something. And, you know, after a year of that, you sort of...I crumbled."

feuds, and actually helped to clear a lot of them up. But it just was unbearable by the end, really."

So what changed now, then? "The new

a**hole, isn't it?" We laugh, but Stubbs is only vaguely amused. "Honestly, it was a year he went on about this. Duncan [Redmonds] from Snuff, too, it was this huge

Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros

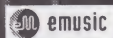


"THIRTEEN YEARS AFTER THE ORIGINAL CLASH DISBANDED, STRUMMER IS STILL GIVING ROCK A KICK IN ITS COMPLACENT PANTS."

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conspiracy of people. Every time they saw me they would just say, 'Go on, do it. Just do one more gig for me!' For, like, his kid's birthday or something like this or whatever it was, his anniversary or something. And, you know, after a year of that, you sort of...I crumbled." The next thing, of course, is Stubbs had to relearn all the old material. "Right, I'd forgotten," he chuckles. "'Cause most Leatherface records, one guitar comes out of one speaker, and the other guitar comes out the other one. So I've got this stereo, listening to my guitar in the one speaker, going 'What the hell is that?' I didn't have a clue!"

As it turns out, it was less difficult to decide whether to continue after Hammond ditched the group in such a ridiculous manner. "We started, so we'll finish, you know what I mean? Our bassist, Leighton [Evans], who used to be the guitarist in my last band, Jesse, knew all the guitar parts, so he went on the guitar and we found (16-year-old) Davey [Lee] here to play the bass. He asked me three years previous, if we ever needed a bass player..."

What?!?!? When he was 13 and you were 34? "Yeah, believe it or not. I went round his place, he worked in a bar, collecting glasses. And I just said, 'Right, you're our bass player then.' 'Cause he'd asked, you know what I mean?"

Damn! A bunch of people, if they'd known that that was all that was required, would have been sending ol' Frankie their resumes for years! Though admittedly, the kid is rather talented. And not just as a musician, either. "He's the one that gets off with the girls," laughs Stubbs. "I've been trying to get off with their mothers through him. Unsuccessfully, I might add! He's a selfish twat." (Yes, the laughter was a bit uproarious here.) I had forgotten from dim memories of *Melody Maker* interviews so long ago, what a ribald sense of humor Stubbs has. But when the laughter finally subsides, I ask why Leatherface, who played a lot of *Mush* during the three gigs I saw in the Philadelphia/New York area, didn't come over to tour back when that older LP was issued here. "No one invited us," he chortles. "We never had any contact with Seed, we had no choice in who our label Roughneck/Fire licensed the thing to. There was sort of talk of a tour, but *Mush* came out in England a year and a half before it came out here. So we already had *Minx* coming out back home, and they've got *Mush* coming out here. And I was supposed to do interviews pretending, right, that *Mush* is the new LP! And I'm like, 'You must be joking.' Couldn't do it, Jack. I might have done it with you, but I couldn't do it with them."

Well, thanks, Frankie, but I like my interviews in person. This, then was worth waiting for, all the more so, again, considering what



unlikely it once was. Flash back to the fateful gig at London's Garage in December 1993, when Stubbs announced the group's end to the crowd and his startled bandmates. Cornered by the surprised press, the singer had said he felt the commitment of the other members was lacking, that he was pouring his heart and soul into writing these lyrics and preparing to go to a gig everyday, while the others were only interested in consuming mass quantities of alcohol. Perhaps without

Hammond now, the band might suffer a little—he was an inspired guitarist who co-wrote the best songs on the new split LP, such as the frankly astounding "Deep Green Beautiful Leveling." But you also have the sense that this is the first time Leatherface has a lineup that is all happy with each other, and the passion remains, as reflected in the shows and on the new record.

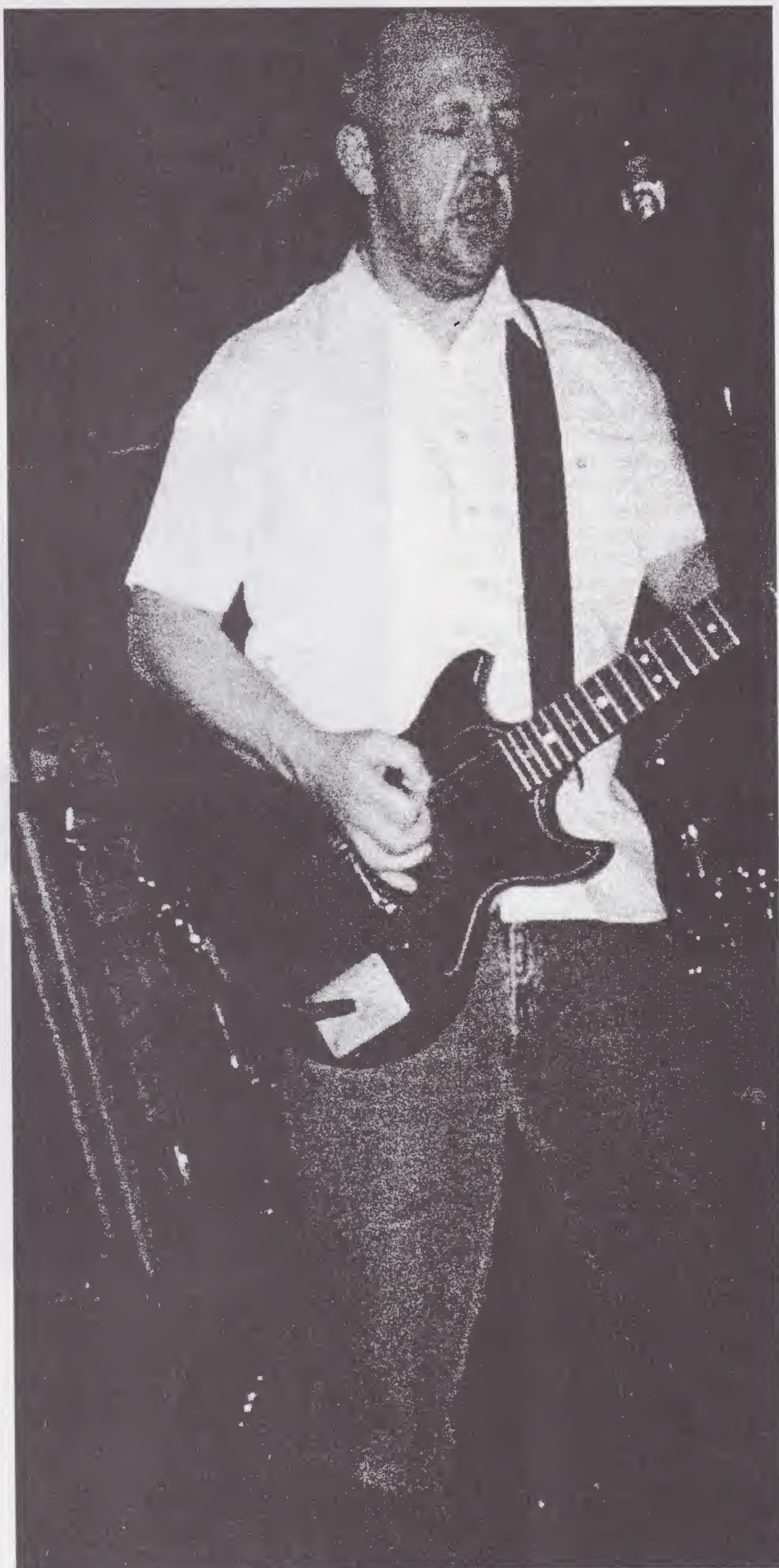
In fact, maybe that's what sets a band like Leatherface apart from others, that sort of

pure dedication and drive, an almost desperation to play. It's a cold contrast between the preening set of today's young British bands, all looking to be the next Oasis and Blur, or the fratboy alterna-mentality of too many U.S. groups. At 37, Stubbs can't be in it for the dough or even, contrary to his previous quip, the women. "I work quite hard, I do what I do," he replies rather humbly, almost bursting into tears when I bring up the new Split LP song "Andy," an obviously painful, emotional reaction to the Winter suicide of the beloved Crighton. ("And now I'll never know what was wrong...A sense of loss like I had never known.") "I can't play or sing that song now," Stubbs explains. "It was recorded for him and that's it, it's too hard."

But why aren't there, say, a crop of 100 bands now, the way Stubbs used to go see the Ruts, or Penetration, or the Damned, that could move and excite and inspire one so much with such obvious emotion? Why are there so few bands doing the type of music that Leatherface is? Where is that sense of desperation, of fiery, intelligent, and principled commitment? "I dunno, I think it might be the world we live in," Stubbs decides. "We live in a very gray world, these days. In Britain, we've got the politicians, for some reason, they all want to look like Bill Clinton. They've all got suits, no one can have a beard anymore. Remember the guy Michael Foot, who was the leader of the Labour party? He used to turn out all dirty, rumpled. But this bloke, it was what he said that set him apart. The bloke was a brilliant speaker. He just looked like shite. Now you've got people, the suits, what comes out the mouth is really puerile. They're not saying anything."

Ahh, the often-mentioned triumph of image over substance, in government as well as art. "Yeah. This is the world we live in. It's all waffle. The music scene's a bit of that too. Lots of posturing. I think everything is reflected by the world we live in. Take a look at America, you have a sort of reputation. Everyone knows about your big Cadillac, the style that American cars have. And now, they all look like that, the f***ing same as they do in Europe, or anywhere else! Everything has been standardized. Music will be standardized. The radio stations will only play the same song over and over. So even the bands standardize themselves."

True words that only serve to make the valiant exceptions all the more remarkable. One listen to their new split LP with Hot Water Music, or 10 minutes at one of the Leatherface's concerts, is enough to blow you away with that substance and that one-on-one communication that is so lacking. You wanted something more real in your art, in your music? It's almost hard to stand so much reality pouring out of your speakers. ⊕



I'm a cunt, I'm a cunt, I'm a COUNTRY GIRL!!!

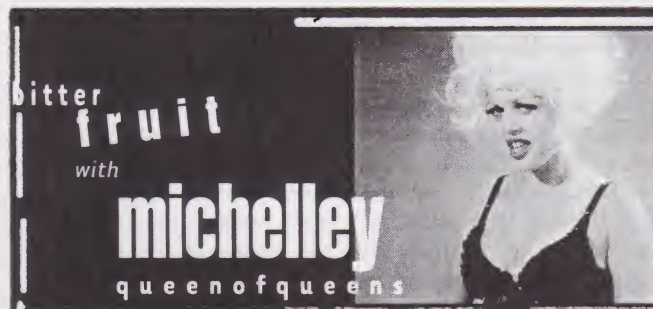
About a year ago, in true Grizzly Adams style, I packed up my belongings and loved ones and ran to the hills. I knew that I, a tattooed punk rock lesbian, would be quite safe in a town where brother/sister couples bearing offspring had not always been uncommon. I had no fear of the locals (they had seen it all!) or the isolation. I was looking forward to losing the homicidal desire that accompanied my daily subway rides. I wanted to smell gardenias and posies, not garbage and piss. I wanted to escape the place that, to me, was drained of its unique creative energy by its "fascist" mayor and his abhorrent Banana Republic-wearing, Starbucks-drinking, blow-job queen troops of an invading army from the mall of America, or Boston, or his asshole, or wherever they came from.

It was a huge decision for me, the girl who at the tender age of 14 had the lofty dream of running away to live in a dirty abandoned warehouse on the West Side Highway. I had just seen the movie "Times Square", and it ruled my life. Eventually, through hard work and determination, I achieved my goal of becoming a "Sleaze Sister". I drank warm Thunderbird in well-lit old man bars with no bathroom doors. I had drunken brawls in the middle of Houston street, in the middle of winter. I sang in bands wearing ridiculous getups. I hung out in what my granny likes to call "rough" neighborhoods with shady characters. I went to "scary" rock shows where grown, live men shoved beer bottles up their asses or, even scarier for NYC, didn't. I went to peep shows, porn parties, public demonstrations, and other events that begin with the letter P. I was the ultimate drama queen. In short, I had all the fun a youngster could have in that dirty, delightful, despicable town- and then some.

I wish (for the sake of those still hoping to realize a similar dream) that I could say that I hit the high road due to fear. I'd like to say that I am too old to make it down the five flights of stairs to buy cat food for my nine beloved cats (not to mention myself) anymore. I wish I could describe myself as a survivalist who has decided to start my own Borscht Belt hillbilly militia. I simply haven't...yet. No, I left NYC because, quite frankly, it sucks. If economic lust is your driving force, and your only desire in life is to acquire objects, build capital, and wank the Man's flaccid peepee, then by all means go there...NOW. You can help the good Mayor and his soulless legions rip out and destroy the last meager vestiges of flavor that the city still holds for us marginal folk. Repressive night life and sex club laws (which, I might add, have had a significantly negative impact on the queer performance scene), Disney in Times Square, insane police brutality, Encephalitis, the jaywalking ban...as Iron Maiden once said, "Run For The Hills."

So I ran. What I've discovered on incest mountain are emancipation and excitement. In "The Big Crapple", emancipation equals traveling from your tiny, vermin-infested apartment to your slave wage sweatshop job. After you've given most of your strength to your mosquito-like boss, it's back on the train you go, loaded down with heavy groceries which you spent the teeniest portion of your paycheck on, because it already belongs to your landlord. As you stand wearily on the delayed subway, smelling other people's breath and pit stank, you think about how great it

is that in NYC you don't need a car to get around! On Incest Mountain, emancipation equals swimming naked in a pristine mountain stream with no other humans around for miles. Your slave wage, sweatshop job only sucks you dry twice a week, because your rent is so small that volunteer work would pay it. If you're hungry you can eat what's growing in your garden after you sing Black Sabbath songs with your friends. Then you can go lie in your hammock for a snooze or some afternoon delight!



Excitement in NYC always involves going to a bar, sometimes because your band or your friend's band is playing. You have to go see your friends' bands even when they suck- especially when they suck. Sometimes you go to the bar because you have put on your rock star pants and glitter eye-shadow (male or female) and want to have some sex and alcohol. Sometimes the bar has an art show. Whatever the reason, you are going to the bar, even if you are in AA- especially if you're in AA. Sometimes you can go to the movies and imagine what it would be like to be someone else, or you can go shopping. You are always going shopping in NYC, whether you like it or not. You must never leave your house without money. You will NOT make it back alive.

Venturing out of the house on incest mountain does not require large amounts of cash. On incest mountain, if you have a dream sometimes money will fall from the sky to help you realize it. Lisa Kirk, artist, activist, and owner of the badass shop @Home and Recreation, has had firsthand experience with this phenomenon. She left "fun City" to escape what she calls the "Monica Lewinsky clones" that she felt were invading and "Mallifying" her once delightfully freakish city. After isolating herself for a period of time she approached the town govt about painting a mural. She wanted to return some of the beauty and peace she had found living out in the sticks. She was not expecting any compensation or even approval for her creativity. To her supreme astonishment, the town encouraged her muse and paid her for her efforts. Now she and her friends are working with RampTech to build a skate park for the local kids. The park is being paid for with a generous allocation of town money. Next summer she wants to buy an Ice Cream truck and sell punk records out of it. What a cool idea! Keep in mind that this is a poor rural community. Yet NYC, the biggest, fattest, richest motherfucker on the block says it can't even afford to send all of its children to school properly.

Building fancy Skate Parks is not the only way that Incest mountain cares about its progeny. Community centers in two towns that I know of hold weekly punk rock shows for the numerous alternative and skater kids that live in the area. Kiowa and Dave, who play in a band called "Wendy and the Bullies",

HIT SQUAD

think country living blows, but still admit that for the middle of nowhere there "is more of an underground music scene here than anywhere else." They go on to complain about the town of Woodstock's youth center, where there was once a thriving scene. Apparently, money raised to buy a new PA was spent on a pool table. When the pool table was moved into the youth center, the bands had to move to the community center with a shitty sound system. Rules got stricter and interest waned. Not surprising in a town run by bullshit former hippies turned capitalists whose only concern is raking in tourist money from the atrocious, identical, chachkas being hawked from almost every douchey store front. Kiowa and Dave are curious about the scene on incest mountain. Although they listen mostly to old school punk, citing the fact that "most new punk sucks," they mention several local bands that kick ass. Some of the favorites among incest mountain youth are Techno Drome, Fuse, Pleonasm, 5StarKids, Solace, and Peanut Gallery. During the winter, when the bands stop playing weekly, there is abundant skiing and snowboarding.

There are eight million suckers in the naked city, and I know more than one of 'em. My friends who remain in the urban epicenter often ask me quite gravely if I'm "OK". They act as if I have decided to join the Mormons, eat only human fecal matter, and marry Sally Jesse Raphael! Moving to the country is not the same as having a terminal illness or wearing diapers to get your kicks! They want to hear that I am miserable. They need to hear that I am desperate to return to the Emerald city, but that its sentinels WILL NOT throw open its golden, hot dog-encrusted gates because I have cowshit on my dirty bare feet. They want reassurance that the misery they inflict upon themselves by staying in a city that is uninhabitable for anyone other than the outrageously wealthy, is the best and only decision a person can make. Should I tell them that $2 + 2 = 5$ just so they can sleep at night? When they ask me if I'm OK, I shout with joy in the affirmative, "YES MOTHERFUCKER, I AM GREAT!! LIVING IN THE COUNTRY KICKS ASS! I'M SO GLAD I ESCAPED FROM THAT BORING, DISEASE-RIDDEN SHITHOLE, WHERE YOU SCRAPE OUT YOUR MEAGER EXISTENCE, WHILE I WAS STILL AMBULATORY! HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!!!"

As I write this Adolph Giuliani is threatening the Brooklyn Museum with eviction because they currently have a painting on display depicting a black Virgin Mary decorated with elephant dung. The Catholic church is whining because they don't understand that the First Amendment allows artists to literally and figuratively shit on their icons. The King of the cops is ignoring

our constitutional rights because the museum has closed off the exhibit to children, since a city law prohibits them from having age-restricted shows. I have seen the painting, and it is not sexually explicit or violent I would allow my daughter to view it, but then again, I'm not a repressed Christian who thinks that what naturally falls from an elephant's ass is filthier and somehow more evil than paint that comes from a plastics factory. While this "dangerous" painting hangs on the wall of the Brooklyn Museum, fatally wounding people's ideology, cancer-causing poison is being dropped from the sky to "protect" the city's residents from disease. Low income families live like amoebas on fleas on rats, all for the privilege of having a mailing address in "the greatest city on earth". New York City, my heart's devotion, let it sink back into the ocean. Meanwhile, on incest mountain the scent of wood smoke is in the air, the apple trees are dripping with ripe fruit, and I have all the time I need to convey my bitterness to you, dear reader.

For more info about the incest mountain scene, @home and recreation, or Michelley QueenofQueens, the Bitter Fruit herself, send your she-mail to mcfeelme@ulster.net ☺

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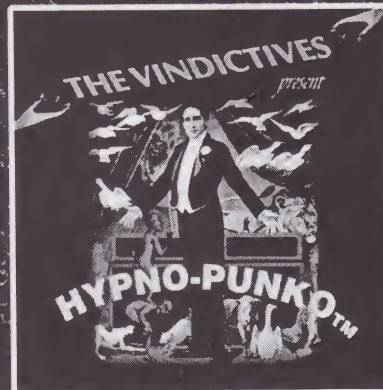
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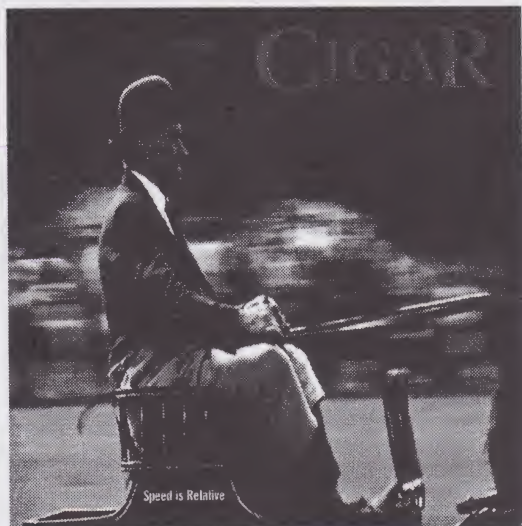
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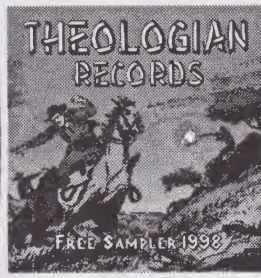
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the CHICKEN

In the summer of '98 I attended a Chicken Hawks' CD release party celebrating the arrival of their debut R.A.F.R. album "Siouxicide City", which was held in the band's home town of Sioux City, Iowa. Standing in the midst of their friends and fans I was able to get a true sense of the midwestern frustration that seeps thru songs like "High From Bastard City" and "Teenager". To a born and bred Los

Angeleno like myself, Sioux City's youth culture seemed like a throwback to the pre-John Hughes/indoor mall-damaged '80s. A time when classic rock would blare from every car stereo and the town's young people would drink, get high, and have sex without any Dawson's Creek style introspection. Sure, punk rock has permeated the well of mainstream life in Iowa, like it has everywhere else in America. Take a

walk thru the streets of Sioux City and you're bound to see a smattering of bright-colored hair here or a body piercing there. But for the most part, the four members of the Chicken Hawks, which includes singer Betsy Philips, guitarist Pete Philips, bassist Tammy Gun and drummer "Hot Rod" Todd, definitely stand out in a crowd of locals.

Pete Philips had been playing guitar in bands for sixteen years in Sioux City before

words + pictures by bob cantu



HAWKS

forming the Chicken Hawks with his wife Betsy approximately four years ago. His early years as a musician were spent cranking out versions of Allman Brothers and Loverboy songs in local bars. With no club scene to speak of, being in a cover band was the only way you could play music in Sioux City at that time. At least that's what Pete believed before he discovered punk rock music. "Once I got turned

on to punk rock" recounts Pete, "I said fuck this Allman Brothers shit! I wanna play something cool!"

The "something cool" that Pete sought to bring to the world took the form of a number of punk bands that Pete now describes as "not very important". The possible exceptions might be a band called Kid Death that included future Humpers guitarist Mark Lee and a group called Fur that

included future Chicken Hawks' bassist Tammy Gun. But for the most part his past collaborators seemed to lack the ambition or the vision to be in a "real band" that recorded and toured outside of their own state. Philips attributes this to what he calls "the Sioux City mentality". "A lot of people don't understand that you can go out and tour if you want. People just tend to get stuck here," explains Pete, "either



because they don't believe in themselves or they aren't willing to take the risk or something."

Falling James, the singer for the L.A. band Leaving Trains and a writer for the *L.A. Weekly*, once described the Chicken Hawks as what the Cramps would be like if the gender roles were reversed. Well, legend has it that Lux Interior picked Poison Ivy up while she was hitchhiking in Sacramento, and similarly Pete Philips was picked up by his future wife Betsy while she was driving down the street with a mutual acquaintance who recognized Pete. "Betsy was trying to act all cool, like she didn't have any interest in me," recalls Pete, "but I was totally enamored with her." Oddly enough, however, once the pair had hooked up the idea of starting a band together didn't come right away. It was after they saw a band called Firework that featured

and left Iowa, transplanting the band to Los Angeles for a brief time. With a rhythm section comprised of local Los Angelinos, this version of the Chicken Hawks soon became the darlings of the Hollywood and downtown club circuit. Unfortunately for their L.A. fans, the Chicken Hawks remained an L.A. band for a mere six months or so before returning to Sioux City. "We missed our home," Pete explained later. One good thing that came out of their time in Los Angeles, however, was that it solidified their connection with the R.A.F.R. label, which had included the band on volume two of their series of compilation CDs. This paved the way for the eventual recording and release of "Siouxicide City".

R.A.F.R. was formed by former Humpers manager and *Flipside* writer Martin McMartin, who had been a huge Chicken Hawks fan since he first saw them play in

Pete Philips was picked up by his future wife Betsy while she was driving down the street with a mutual acquaintance who recognized Pete. "Betsy was trying to act all cool, like she didn't have any interest in me," recalls Pete, "but I was totally enamored with her."

Darren Lynwood and his girlfriend Janet that Pete and Betsy were inspired to put a band of their own together. Three months later they were playing in Los Angeles. The line up for that first Chicken Hawks tour included Betsy on vocals, Pete on guitar, drummer James Dean, and bassist Tammy Gun, who was recruited at the last minute. The Chicken Hawks' shows at Al's Bar and at Fifty Bucks Gallery left quite an impression on the L.A. scene. With a short set of provocative songs that included "Stick It In", "Heart Throb Man" and a Chuck Harrod and the Anteaters' cover "They Wanna Fight", the Chicken Hawks won many fans on their very first night at Als, including this writer. The experience of playing Al's Bar was a profound one for the band as well, particularly Pete, who described it later as "sacred ground" and an "amazing fucking place".

Pete and Betsy were so taken with Southern California living that they packed up

Sioux City while travelling with the Humpers on their "Live Forever Or Die Trying" tour. Produced by Sally Browder and former Humpers and current Crowd guitarist Mark Lee, the entire album was recorded by a restored Chicken Hawks line-up that included Tammy Gun and "Hot Rod" Todd (who had replaced Dean on drums) in a single weekend early in '98. A frenzied summer of touring followed the release of the CD, as well as the inclusion of "High From Bastard City" from the R.A.F.R. album in the HBO movie *Black And White*. Although they have vague plans for recording a follow-up sometime in the future, the Chicken Hawks are as of this writing still promoting "Siouxicide City".

"All we're planning," says Pete Philips "is to tour as much as possible and get the fucking record out there to stores and into people's hands." That should be good news for their growing legion of fans. ⊕

Tour Ads

in

HIT LIST

"...it's sunday...we're broken down in the top of massachusetts, looking for a motel room...uhh...it's pretty heavy."

(not only that, but nobody came to the shows)

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HIT SQUAD

Tony writes,
"What is song publishing? Is it really necessary or is it just a way for the government to make money off of you and your music? Sometimes I see bands release their own stuff and they put an anarchist

symbol or an anti-copy-right symbol on their sleeve or something like that. Do you think the bands that do that are doing something admirable or are they doing something stupid by not publishing their music? I'm asking because I have an independent DIY record I want to release, and I haven't done anything by way of song publishing yet. Any advice on how to actually go about

having your songs published would also be appreciated."

This is a very good question, but it would actually take several books to give a complete answer. Here is a short overview.

The recording part of the music business in the Western world is set up this way. There are two intellectual properties underlying a recording. One is the composition, which can be likened to a blueprint for a house, and the other is the actual musical performance fixed on tape, called the master recording—it would be like the house built from the blueprint. Each one of these properties can be copyrighted and registered with the government, either by the same person or by two different people.

Copyright law is not a government scam to get money from musicians, but rather a "scam" by copyright owners to use government resources paid for with taxpayers' money, such as the copyright office and the court system, to make sure that income generated by a recording gets to the owners and not to bootleggers. Copyright is a private property concept and is

the grant of a limited monopoly to a person. The reason the community (your government) makes this grant is so that creators, and not those who steal, will be rewarded for their endeavors—a worthy goal, I think.

In the music business, either a record label pays the recording costs and thereby ends up owning the master recording and copyright, or you pay for the recording and you own the master and copyright. You could then distribute it yourself or license it to a label. For the right to sell the recording, the label or distributor pays a royalty or some other percentage of income to the owner, and hopefully that gets to the musicians playing on the recording. But labels, no matter how small, usually have an advantage over a do-it-yourselfer in the promotion of a record, since promotion requires good contacts and cash.

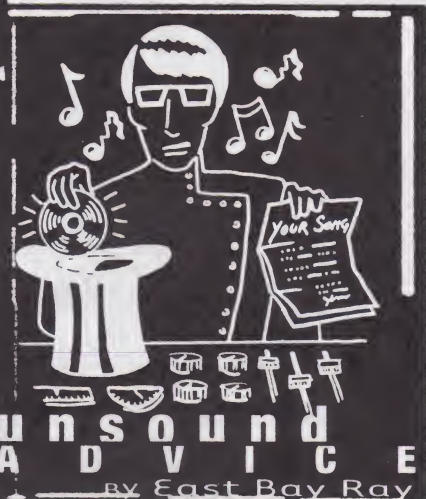
Historically, the composition copyright was handled by a publisher, who plugged the song to singers, bands, and record companies. Nowadays a lot of musicians write their own songs, and whoever is promoting their records is also promoting the compositions and is therefore acting as a song publisher. What's called a "mechanical license" (from the mechanical player piano days) is granted by the publisher for a fee to the record company, which can then use the song in the manufacturing of CDs, cassettes, and vinyl. The fee is usually based on the "statutory rate", which is defined in the copyright act and usually comes to a few pennies a song per unit made and sold.

There is also another right called the "performance right", which is the right to use the composition in broadcasts on radio and television. When a record is released, an individual publishing company can be set up and the company and songs can be registered with a performance rights society like BMI or ASCAP. These agencies collect and credit the songwriter and publisher a few pennies each time the song is performed on radio or TV. It can add up. Unfortunately, musicians playing on the recording don't currently have this performance right, though

Congress is contemplating granting musicians this right to be compensated for digital radio and TV broadcasts in the future.

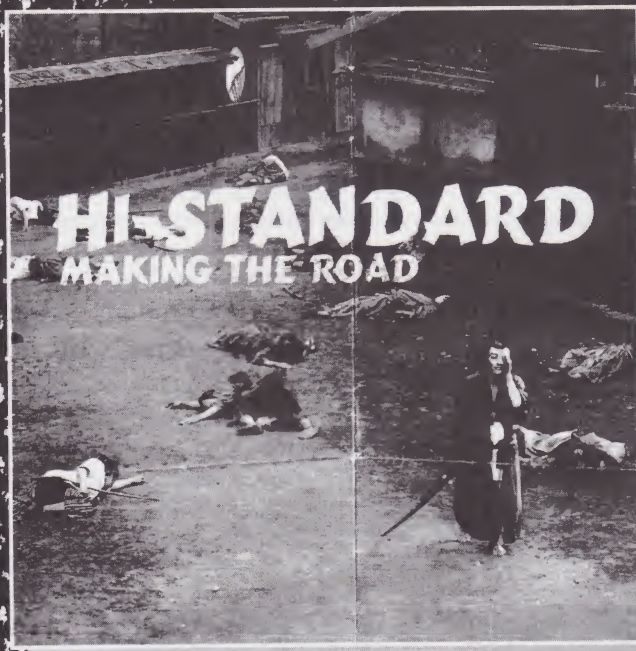
All these rights to collect moola stem from the federal copyright laws and treaties with other countries around the world. In your case, the owner of the master tapes and of the songs is probably the same entity, so a mechanical license wouldn't be necessary for you. But forming a publishing company would allow you to collect performance fees, if you anticipate any airplay. However, you can just put the recording out and see if it generates any interest before spending extra money on all this stuff. However, in that case there is the risk that some other person

might register your release before you do. In that case you'd learn that it's actually worth something, if only because someone else felt it was worth stealing. ⊕



Copyright law is not a government scam to get money from musicians, but rather a "scam" by copyright owners to use government resources paid for with taxpayers' money...to make sure that income generated by a recording gets to the owners and not to bootleggers.

HI-STANDARD



HI-STANDARD MAKING THE ROAD

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THE ROCK & PORN CONNECTION

BOOK REVIEW

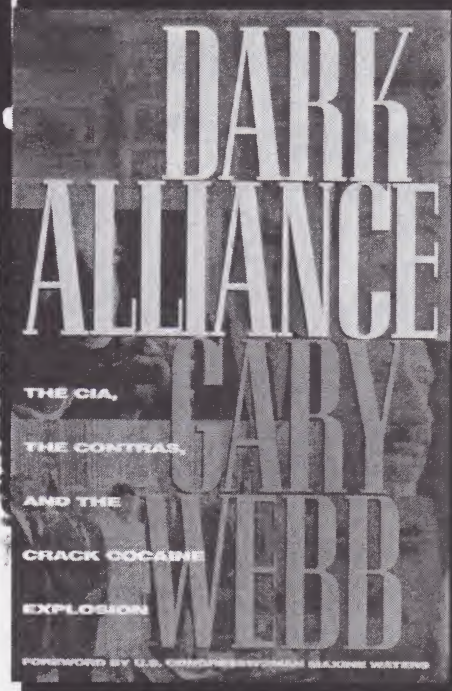
Two years ago Gary Webb touched off a national controversy with his news stories linking the CIA and the Nicaraguan Contras to the rise of the crack epidemic in Los Angeles and elsewhere. His gripping new book, richly researched and documented, deserves an even wider audience and discussion.

The book profits from corroborating CIA and police records that have been released in response to his stories. Documents from a drug raid in October 1986 show that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department had already stumbled upon the substance of Webb's charges about Nicaraguan drug trafficker Daniel Blandón a full 10 years before Webb's

DARK ALLIANCE: The CIA, the Contras, and the Crack Cocaine Explosion

By Gary Webb

Seven Stories Press; 548 pages; \$24.95



account was published in the San Jose Mercury News.

One sheriff's department document reported that "the Blandón organization is believed to be moving hundreds of kilos of cocaine a month in the Southern California area." It added that "the money goes toward the purchase of arms to aid the 'Contra' rebels fighting the civil war in Nicaragua."

Did these sheriffs' reports in 1986 oversimplify what they had discovered?

Possibly. But their fears that the Feds would not allow their case to go forward were rapidly confirmed. The case was dropped; key documents and evidence disappeared from the files; and Blandón, who had been arrested with cocaine in his possession, was released within hours to continue trafficking, "even as the FBI watched."

Suppose the documents on Blandón and his Nicaraguan mentor Norwin Meneses, an even bigger drug trafficker and Contra supporter, had been released in the 1980s instead of now. Critics alleging a Contra-drug link would have been proven right, and the CIA's and Reagan Administration's routine denials exposed. The Contras might not have received another nickel.

Thus the Administration, instead of arresting Meneses and Blandón, protected them. Later, Blandón became a DEA informant, and apparently so did Meneses.

Webb claims that in the mid- 1980s, the flow of cocaine from Blandón to L.A. crack dealer Ricky Ross reached its zenith. This was the period of the Boland amendment prohibiting U.S. government aid to the Contras. It was also when Ross enlarged his network to include a host of smaller crack producers, many of them members of various Crips gangs.

By the time Ross was busted in 1987 he and the Crips had expanded their crack empire across the United States. According to Webb, Blandón was also selling "exotic weapons and communication gear . . . to Freeway Rick and his fellow crack dealers."

Among the storm of issues raised by Webb's original series, one of the most hotly contested was the importance of Blandón, Ross and the Crips to the crack epidemic that in 1986 burst into public awareness. In the book, Webb musters formidable expert sources for this allegation.

In other respects the book can be criticized. As a journalist trained to write compact stories, he is stronger on street and court detail than on the bureaucratic complexities of Washington. Subtle arguments can become telescoped into punchy summaries that are sometimes oversimplified. Webb is most controversial when implicating the CIA, relying heavily on slippery phrases like "CIA agent." To him it is important that in December 1981 a "CIA agent," Contra commander Enrique Bermúdez, "had given the goddamned order" to Meneses and Blandón to begin trafficking in support of the Contras. In the larger context of such a powerful book, this seems likely to generate needless quibbles, and remains a side issue at best.

As even Webb admits, the CIA in 1981 had relatively little daily control over Contra leaders.

More important was the decision of top Reagan advisers (not just in the CIA) to reorganize (as Contras) the old Somoza National Guard, about whose drug and other criminal activities the Nicaraguan bishops had complained back in 1978.

Equally disastrous was the initial decision to leave oversight of the Contras to Argentine intelligence officers, for whom the drug-financing of operations was a way of life.

On March 16, 1998, in response to Webb's allegations, the CIA Inspector-General admitted that in early 1982 the CIA secured permission from Attorney General William French Smith not to report on the drug activities of CIA agents, assets and contract employees. This agreement was not fully rescinded until 1995, when Webb began his investigations.

Here is the true CIA responsibility for our drug plague: not by giving an "order," but by condoning the traffic, protecting it, obstructing the efforts of those who tried to combat it and helping to force honest journalists like Webb who reported it out of jobs.

From this 1982 agreement apparently flowed even more bizarre drug aspects of Iran-Contra: special freedom of movement for indicted drug traffickers into and out of the United States, sometimes without having to clear Customs; similar privileges for their trafficking airplanes; federal intervention to stop domestic drug cases, or seal or even destroy evidence; a government-protected airbase for traffickers in El Salvador (Ilopango) that a DEA agent could not visit; and even CIA-DEA plotting to smuggle wanted or convicted drug traffickers away from Central American law enforcement.

None of these serious allegations has ever been properly investigated. Until they are, it will appear that in the real drug war - the one between key protected traffickers and the American people - some parts of the U.S. government are on the wrong side. ⊕

—Peter Dale Scott

THE ALMIGHTY TOP TENS

SHITLIST

Jeff Bale

BITCHSCHOOL - 7" EP
 CHEVELLES - "At Second Glance" CD
 DARLINGS - "Wet Dreams & Teen Machines" CD
 DIODES - "Tired of Waking Up Tired" CD
 EYES - "The Arrival of..." CD
 PHYSICALS - "Skulduggery" CD
 SAFETY PINS - "Just in Fun" 7"
 UGLY DUCKLINGS - "Too Much Too Soon" CD
 V/A - "Searchin' for Shakes" CD
 V/A - "SKIRTS AND SKINS" SPLIT EP

Jeremy Cool

MOPES - "Accident Waiting To Happen" CD
 AMERICAN STEEL - "Rogue's March" CD
 BLACK CAT MUSIC - "This Is The New Romance" EP
 VINDICTIVES - "Hypno Punko" CD
 BOMBSHELL ROCKS - "Street Art Gallery" CD
 MALIGNUS YOUTH - "Vinyl" CD
 NOFX, THE THUMBS & DIVIT - Live at the CW Saloon
 STITCHES - "8 x 12" CD
 HEARTDROPS - "East Side Drive" CD
 THE PROBE - Issue #8

Brett Mathews

1. DIVIT - "Latest Issue" CD
 2. AMERICAN HEARTBREAK - "Postcards From Hell" CD
 3. TRICKY WOO - "Sometimes I Cry" CD
 4. TIME FLIES - "On Our Way" CD
 5. TRAVOLTAS - Anything
 6. BROKEN - Anything
 7. CHEVELLES - All I've heard so far
 8. VOICE OF A GENERATION - "Odd Generation" EP
 9. MAGEES - Don't ask who, just go find out!

Tina Lucchesi

1. THE REAL KIDS - "Better Be Good" LP
 2. THE REAL KIDS - "No Place Fast" LP
 3. THE BOYS - "Peel Session" LP
 4. THE BOYS - "In Concert"
 5. GINO WASHINGTON - "Out of This World" LP
 6. THE MEOWS - "The Boring Life Of" CD
 7. SUPERSNAZZ/THE BARBA ROCKETS PATROL - "Time Bomb"
 8. THE PEEPS - 7" EP On Super 8 Records/live at the CW Saloon
 9. TRICKY WOO - Live at the CW Saloon
 10. THE BLACK HALOS - Live at Sixteen

Jimi Cheetah

THE BEAUTYS - "Liquor Pig" CD
 SUBTONIX - Demo Tape
 AMERICAN STEEL - "Rogues March" LP
 SECRET LOVERS - "Run" 7"
 GREAT GOD PAN - Issue #13
 WONTONS - "Extra Spicy" 7"
 RAY DAYTONA AND HIS GOO GOO BOMBS - "Real Black King" 7"
 BEN IS DEAD - Issue #30
 VICE SQUAD - "Ressurrection" CD
 SCARED OF CHAKA / REAL SWINGERS - Split 7"

Dave Johnson

1. JAWBREAKER - "24 Hour Revenge Therapy"
 2. BURNING AIRLINES - "Mission: Control!" CD/live
 3. CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE - CD
 4. PINHEAD GUNPOWDER - "Goodbye Ellston Avenue" CD
 5. SAVES THE DAY - "Through Being Cool" CD/live
 6. PIEBALD - "If it Weren't for Venetian Blinds..." CD
 7. COMMON RIDER - "Last Wave Rockers" CD/live
 8. JAWBOX - "My Scrapbook of Fatal Accidents" CD
 9. THE SCOTT FARKUS AFFAIR - "Sorrows Learn to Swim" CD
 10. SMALL BROWN BIKE - "Our Own Wars" CD

Your fearless leaders through the vast and daunting catacombs of rock 'n' roll recordings. Just so you know who to blame when you plunk down your hard earned cash on a slab of plastic, run home as fast as your little punk legs will carry you and spin it anxiously, only to find it completely, totally and indisputably sucks: Tina Lucchesi (TL), Greg Lowery (GL), Jeremy Cool (JER), Brett Mathews (BAM), Alan Wright (AW), Dave Johnson (DGJ), Jimi Cheetah (JC), Jeff Bale (JB), Ian Randumb (IR), Ramsey Kanaan (RK), Dimitri Monroe (DJM).

S H I T L I S T

A GLOBAL THREAT

"What The Fuck Will Change" EP

There's always a soft spot in my heart for bands that still have that punk look. No, I don't mean like BLINK 18POO, or even crap like ME FIRST AND THE GIMME GIMMES. I'm talking about leathers with studs and kids sporting Mohawks. This is just that sort of band, with angry, abrasive lyrics and mean, hard, fast music. For a clue into their sound, think early CRASS, or even BATTALION OF SAINTS, hell, think of all those after school, garage bands that our friends were playing in way back when. Support real punk!!! (JM)



(ADD RECORDS/270 CENTRAL STREET/HINGHAM, MA. 02043)

AGAINST THE WALL

"The Truth Movement" CDEP

"The Truth Movement"? The truth is that this thing sounds like a movement. If that NOFX drum-beat being played twice as fast as it should be, mixed with nonstop galloping muted guitar sound is your thing, well than this release is a dream come true for you. The first song is a pretty hard PROPAGANDHI bite. The second and sixth songs are covers of bands that if you said you liked in the eighties, you'd likely (and deservedly) get beaten up, and the other three songs, well,... I think they're all the same song to tell you the truth. I expected a lot more from a label that stole their name from a JAWBREAKER song title. (BAM)

AGAINST THE WALL



the truth movement

(ACCIDENT PRONE/306 N.W. EL NORTE PKWY. #305/ESCONDIDO, CA 92026)

ALL SYSTEMS GO

"All I Want" CD

Slick sounding punkish power-pop featuring former members of BIG DRILL CAR & DOUGH-

BOYS. The song-writing here is excellent, and there are hooks for miles; this stuff could easily be on the radio. I'd tell you to go see them on the Warped Tour, but apparently they broke up two weeks into it, so unfortunately we'll never know how far they could've gone. Still, this album is necessary listening for pop-punk fans. (JER)



(COLDFRONT/PO Box 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

AMERICAN HEARTBREAK

"Please Kill Me" 7"

This is AMERICAN HEARTBREAK's first single off of their upcoming full-length. Just from reviews of this single in other magazines, I've seen AMERICAN HEARTBREAK called the best catchy rock n' roll band going today at least 4 times. Well, let me be the fifth. 2 brilliant rock n' roll gems served up with lots of attitude and layered with hooks galore. Featuring ex-JETBOY guitarist, Billy Rowe, and a rhythm section that's done time in such bands as EXODUS (don't let that scare you) and BAY CITY ROLLERS, these guys have been around long enough to know how to write a great tune, but haven't forgotten how to keep it fun and exciting. Score another hit for Pelado Records!



(PELADO/521 W. WILSON #C-103/COSTA MESA, CA 92627)

ANGELIC UPSTARTS

"Blood On The Terraces" CD

A rerelease (together with 7 live tracks) of the 1987 LP. The UPSTARTS never had a bad record. They not only helped patent the



lar 'street punk' anthemic sing-a-long sound, but coupled it with biting social commentary, (very) left-wing leanings, and songs of enormous melody. Always a class act. This is no exception. (RK)

(CAPTAIN Oi/PO Box 501/HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA/ENGLAND)

ANGRY SAMOANS

"Play The Songs Of Vom" 7"

Apparently, VOM were an early incarnation of ANGRY SAMOANS and in 1978, since AS didn't have too many original tunes, they recorded a demo with a couple of VOM covers on it. These two unreleased tracks are from that demo. I can appreciate this, but not really being a huge AS fan, I don't really like it. It sounds exactly like what it is; a demo. I think this one's for the die-hards. (JER)

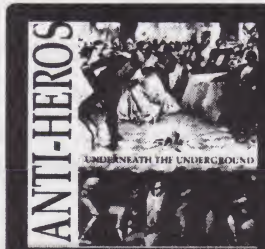


(BULGE/PO Box 1173/GREEN BAY, WI 54305)

ANTI-HEROS

"Underneath The Underground" CD

Leaders of the Lstreetpunk/Oi! scene in Atlanta for many years now. Great new release that will hopefully garner them some wider acclaim. Thirteen powerful anthemic songs with a good social/political conscience, which is evidenced on tracks like "Rich People Don't Go To Jail", "World War 1.3" and "Election Day". Great record from a great band. (JC)



(GMM/PO Box 15234/ATLANTA, GA 30333)

ANTISEEN

"15 Minutes Of Fame, 15 Years Of Infamy" CD

The kings of scuz rock, ANTISEEN have been going at it for 15 years and it doesn't look like they are going to slow down any time soon. Big fat MOTÖRHEAD riffing with a southern flavor and

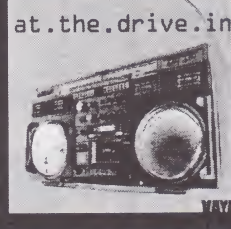
a fuck you attitude. 28 tracks that cover a lot of history. Songs about sex, drugs, ghosts, violence (domestic and imported), two headed dogs and all the people who can just go fuck off already. Also feature covers of IGGY, the TALKING HEADS and a couple of others. Mine came autographed by the whole band - you know you're jealous. (JC)



(DEATH TRAIN/PO Box 4905/ROCK HILL, SC 29732)

AT THE DRIVE IN "Vaya" CD

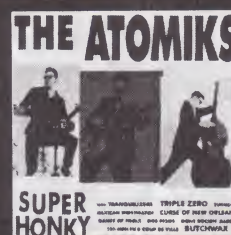
AT THE DRIVE IN are the best live band in the country. Their show is dynamic with amazing energy and incredible, intricate music. On a personal note they are one of the nicest bands around also. I can't say enough good things about this band. They are lumped into the modern emo scene, but I think they easily blow away all the bigger contemporaries like HOT WATER MUSIC and the GET UP KIDS. This CD is great, probably the best recorded work I've heard from them. (JC)



(FEARLESS/13772 GOLDENWEST ST #545/WESTMINSTER, CA 92683)

ATOMIKS "Super Honky" CD

Above average punk/rockabilly band with catchy songs that sound fresh and new. BLASTERS meets the CRAMPS feel to it. Cool packaging. Favorite line: "Hey baby, are you going my way, she said I ain't going nowhere." In a style that is totally played out, these three rock'n'rollers are OK by me. (JC)



(702/PO Box 204/RENO, NV 89504)

ATTENTION ROOKIES "Spritpop" 10" EP

Cutesey German female fronted pop punk that hits the mark about 3/4 of the time, and lacks balls the other 1/4. The good stuff is pretty awesome, although there's some serious ELVIS COSTELLO thievery happening on "Popsong." When it started, I thought they were covering "Veronica." I guess if you're gonna borrow a riff from someone, you might as well go for the gold. Anyway, this is good, but I have no idea how to go about finding it. (JER)



(JULE AXEMANN/AM GRUN 35/35037 MARBURG/06421/163076)

AUTOMATIC "Crossing Kill Creek" EP

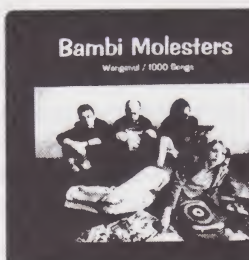
Mediocre skater Hardcore. Tight chunky rythms that suffer mostly from an overall generic song quality. Big sound production that should make them contenders to open up for some Fat bands or get side stage on the Warped tour. (JC)



(INDECISION/PO Box 5781/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 912615)

BAMBI MOLESTERS "Wanganui" 7" EP

Looking at the cover of this 7" you'd think the chick is the singer. I guess if you are all ugly guys, you put the cute chick in the front. Also I thought it looked like it would be girl-vocal pop-punk stuff, wrong again!! This is a surf band with vocals. Although the instrumental "Coastal Disturbance" has way beefy reverb, the vocal numbers are way too depressing and moody. Man!! let the chick sing!!(TL)



REVIEWS

(PLASTIC BOMB RECORDS/SWEN BOCK, GARTNERSTR.23, 47055 DUSBURG)

BAR FEEDERS "Injun Ron" 7"

The best description of the BAR FEEDERS' sound is that they sound like they don't give a fuck! Sort of an old skatepunk feel, a la JFA or early BAD BRAINS. Definitely not something that everyone else is doing right now, which is refreshing. (BAM)



(FASTMUSIC/368 BROADWAY #511/NEW YORK, NY 10013)

BASICKS "Little Thing" 7"

This is your basic (heh, heh) three chord, no frills punk rock n' roll, and it's just dandy. Nothing to get too excited over, but it ain't bad. I'll keep an eye out for 'em. (JER)



(LOOKOUT/PO Box 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)

BATMAN PUKE "Living in Fear" 7"

What a load of crap. Here's some German punks, pissing and moaning about going to war. Fuck off, your not even gonna be first pick if Germany goes to war. What's that? Just tell you about the music and stuff my opinions? Fine, I think it doesn't matter, because the lyrics and the drive behind it blows. These are the kind people that will never be happy regardless, of what's given to them. If you want more out of life, go



SHITLIST

work for it you apathetic fools. (JM)

(PLASTIC BOMB/GUSTAV-FREYTAG-STR. 18/47057 DUISBURG, GERMANY)

BATTALION OF SAINTS A.D. "Cuts" CD

All star line-up of Asaints featuring mainstay leader George Anthony, Terry Bones (MINISTRY, BROKEN BONES, BILLYCLUB, DISCHARGE etc.) and a couple of UK SUBS. All new material. Fast heavy metal punk with an intensity that rarely lets up. Great band no matter what the line-up. Falling somewhere between DISCHARGE and MOTÖRHEAD. (JC)

(TAANGI/706 PISMO COURT/SAN DIEGO, CA 92109)

BEAUTIES "Liquor Pig" CD

The BEAUTIES are my new favorite band, and by the time you read this, I hoped to have signed them to at least a 7" deal. Great catchy, punk as fuck tunes that blend lots of fuck you attitude, but isn't afraid to throw in a melodic fill here and there. Take the best elements of L7 and the LOUDMOUTHS, and throw in a hint of CRAMPSy guitar. A winner, from start to finish. "Re:Tard", "Shut Your Piehole" and "We Are The Beauties" are instant classics. (JC)

(BEEB/PO Box 10037/Ft. WAYNE, IN 46850)

BELL "A New Kind Of Rome" CD

It is always great to check out a new band/label that I've never heard of and find out they totally rock. I hope this is a sign of good things to come from both. Raw edgy rock 'n' roll. Raspy girl vocals that are tough, but unafraid of trying

melodies and harmonies. I even liked the acoustic song. (JC)



(YEAH IT'S ROCK/PO Box 85775/SEATTLE, WA 98145)

BIRDLAND (with LESTER BANGS) CD

This ain't half as good as I wanted it to be, given Lester Bangs' stature as a music critic and fan, but it grows on ya. Didn't he have some demos backed by the J GEILS guys floatin' around somewhere? Perhaps of some historical interest. (DJM)

(DIONYSUS/PO Box 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)

BEYOND "No Longer At Ease" CD

I'm glad to see that this CD finally came out. BEYOND were a standout New York hardcore band in 1989, whose members went on to form more well known bands such as QUICKSAND and ORANGE 9 M.M.. BEYOND sounds a lot like GORILLA BISCUITS, but with more of a MINOR THREAT-style aggression. Be forewarned of the false harmonics on all the "metal" solos and the occasional double kick drum raising it's ugly head! Nonetheless, still worth having. This CD also contains BEYOND's original demo tape as well. (BAM)

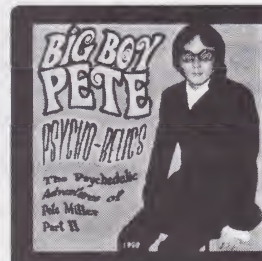
(SOME/405 W. 14 St. NO.3/NEW YORK CITY, NY 10014)



BIG BOY PETE "Psycho-relics" CD

Fifteen previously unreleased gems by this semi-legendary '60s British guitarist/singer/songwriter. Big Boy Pete is a psyched-out popster with roots rock 'n' roll in his heart. All of these tracks (minus track one) were deemed too weird for public consumption. Track one is the demo for his "Baby I Got News For You" 45, which I guess is one of the more valuable collectable records from that era. Compare to a more rooted in reality (though not by much) SYD BARRETT. (JC)

(DIONYSUS/PO Box 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)



BITCHY "Black Socks and Happiness" CD

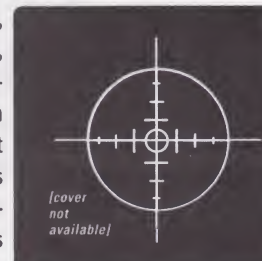
Apparently, this is a side project for some of the guys from BLUE MEANIES, but don't expect any fucked up, polka-ska madness from this outfit. These guys are straight up rock n' roll with a bit of 80's hardcore thrown in to the mix. This is some rockin' stuff, and goddamn does that singer sound pissed off! Pretty cool artwork too. (JER)

(THICK/409 W. WOLCOTT AVE./CHICAGO, IL 60622)



BLACK CAT MUSIC "This Is The New Romance" 12" EP

This is really, really, really (I mean really) good. And I'm not just saying that 'cause Jimi works here and all (actually I am, 'cause he's sort of a bully); this is fucking great. "Wine In A Box", the first song on the b-side (is there a "B-Side" proper on a 12" EP?), is just about the coolest song I've heard in awhile. Kinda dark, a little moody, but still melod-



REVIEWS

ic, these guys are kinda like a punk rock version of the SMITHEREENS. Think about a sped up version of "Behind The Wall Of Sleep." Here's another strange comparison; "Bedrock" era FOETUS. Way less mental of course, but the similarities are there. The lyrics are great, the music's incredible, my only complaint is that there are only four songs. Find this at all costs. (JER)

(CHEETAH'S/PO Box 4442/BERKELEY, CA 94704)

BLACK HALOS "Retro World" 7"

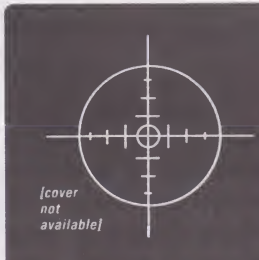
Trashed out glammy punk rock from Canada of all places. Kind of along the same lines as NY's way underrated D GENERATION. Good tunes, lotsa hooks, cool tattoos; you know the drill. (JER)



(DEVIL DOLL/PO Box 1449/LONDON, ON. CANADA N6A 5M2)

BLINK-182 "Enema Of The State" CD

I'm sure by now everyone reading this has been sickened by their over-exposure on mainstream radio and TV. But don't be fooled. This is a supremely brilliant recording from beginning to end. A consistently superb record with not a single filler track on it (and how many records can one truthfully say that about). The hit single is only one of many greats on this disc. Occasionally, the hype gets it right. That time is now. Rockin' pop-punk never sounded so good. (RK)



(MCA - A UNIVERSAL CORPORATION COMPANY)

BLOOD DRAINED COWS "You're Gonna Miss Me" CD

Gregg Turner has a new three-piece band, and their debut is filled with mid-tempo p-rock numbers (some of them countrified), including covers of cuts by the 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS and

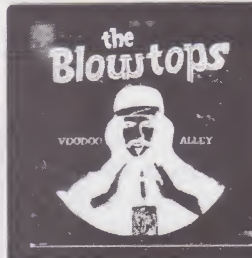
ANGRY SAMOANS. Jeff Dahl produced it, so it's got a nice raw, trebly sound, and in addition scratchy effects have been added throughout to make the CD sound like an old, beat up vinyl record. Most of the songs have good hooks, the lyrics are hilariously cynical and nasty, and their modified version of "Teenager in Love" about a heartbroken necrophiliac has to be heard to be believed. (JB)

(TRIPLE X/PO Box 862529/LOS ANGELES, CA 90086)

BLOWTOPS "Voodoo Alley" 7"

Man this shit is way fucked up...obviously these guys are into the over the top trash sound & fans of that stuff will flip over these four songs. The songs are good, but to my ears, would have been great if they'd lost a little bit of the fuzzed out white noise sound...

(BOTTLENECK/P.O. Box 8144/RENTON VA 20195)



BLUE MEANIES "Kiss Your Ass Goodbye" CD

A weird hybrid of punk, ska and circus music. Sorta like a more punk MR. BUNGLE, or maybe OINGO BOINGO. Pretty interesting (read: freaky) stuff. They kind of remind me of APOCALYPSE HOBOKEN, not so much that they sound like them, but that they're just completely wacked out and doing their own thing. Worth checking out. (JER)

(ASIAN MAN/PO Box 35585/MONTE SERENO, CA 95030)



BO-WEEVILS "Trapped in the Garage" CD

This band doesn't do it for me. Pretty generic 60's garage with organ. Russell likes them; I dunno why. Anyways i'm sick and tired of bands doing "Wildman". Sorry, thumbs down!(TL)

(CORDUROY RECORDS/NO ADDRESS)



BOILS "World Poison" CD

A new disc of 15 As peedy, straight-ahead 'street punk' anthems. Lots of sing-along vocals, steady riffage, and uplifting tunes, akin to early SWINGIN' UTTERS. It all starts to sound a bit samey after a while. (RK)

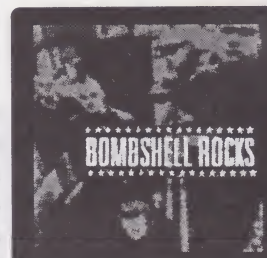
(CYCLONE RECORDS, 24 PHEASANT RUN/MERRIMACK, NH 03054)



BOMBSHELL ROCKS "Street Art Gallery" CD

Whoa! This sounds soooo much like RANCID! That's definitely not a bad thing, 'cause as derivative as this is, I like it way more than I've liked the last two RANCID records. The lyrics can get a bit goofy, but these guys are Swedish, so I'll forgive 'em. This shouldn't be hard to find, being a subsidiary of Epitaph, so if you share my opinion of Tim & co., you might wanna give this a listen. (JER)

(SIDEKICKS/OSTRA NOBELGATEN 9/703 61 OREBRO/SWEDEN)



SHITLIST

BOMBSHELL ROCKS

"Underground Radio" 7"

If you don't want to rush out and buy their new full length on Epitaph (which rules by the way), this is a quick way to check them out. BOMBSHELL ROCKS take the best parts of RANCID & SWINGIN' UTTERS, who in turn have taken the best parts of...well, you know where this is going. My point? This band is great, and well worth your attention. (BAM)

(DSS/#606-233 ABBOTT ST./VANCOUVER, BC V6B 2K7 CANADA)



BONZOS

"Reaction" CD

Spanish take on the pop punk that made Berkeley famous. Six songs in a SCREECHING WEASEL motif. Nothing special; sometimes the singer's accent can prove entertaining, but not enough to warrant buying the record. Keep working on it, my Spanish friends. (JC)

(NO TOMORROW/APDO 1134, 12080/CASTELLON, SPAIN)



BOTTOM 12

"Street Mechanics" LP

Jesus, this is weird shit. I guess I'm a little out the loop, but I'm also willing to bet that this is a joke. An ugly mix of jazz, guitar rock, techno, and some "trippy" elements. I picture some, ah hell, this is crap. Some things aren't meant to happen, like incest, and this is just one of those situations. God, as I listen to this I think how funny it would be to play this when my mom visits.



She'd think I was some kinda asshole. (JM)

(NOIS-O-LUTION/FORSTER STR. 4-5/10999, BERLIN, GERMANY)

BOULDER

"Rage of it" CD

This is straight up metal. Big and menacing. With extensive guitar work that gets a bit noodly at times, but usually stays on track. If metal is your bag, then give them a shot. (JC)

(RIVER ON FIRE/PO Box 771296/LAKEWOOD, OH 44107)



BRASS TACKS

"Just The Facts" CD

Alright, here's the 411 on this CD. 14 tracks of what seems to be trend in American Skinhead rock these days. Can I be more specific? Sure, lyrics about fighting, bonding with your friends, hooligans, and all the usual staples of this genre. Musically it isn't bad, I'm just passed all that tough guy shit. But they got balls for covering SKREWDRIVER's "Back with a Bang". Good things were said about their performance at the Oi Fest in KC. (JM)

(BEER CITY/P.O. Box 26035/MILWAUKEE, WI. 53226-0035)



BROKEN/GLOBAL THREAT split 7"

My favorite hardcore punk outfit is back for more, and this time they brought GLOBAL THREAT along with them. BROKEN offer 3 more gems, with their sound leaning a lot towards their guitarist's old band, PIST. GLOBAL THREAT are more of a really fast street punk, with breakdowns that drop into the



CASUALTIES/UNSEEN sound. A must have for the BROKEN side, and I'm sure you'll spend a fair amount of time listening to the other side as well. (BAM)

(CONTROLLED CONSCIENCE/320 RT. 81/KILLINGWORTH, CT 06419)

MARK BRUBACK

"Riot At The Shriner Circus" CD

This nasal white guy says a lot of funny things over some really exciting music. He talks about cutting up yuppies piece by piece and mailing them back to corporations who use child labor and has a really silly song about HENRY ROLLINS. Highbrow WESLEY WILLIS-type shit with an intelligent political awareness. (BB)

(OUTCAST RECORDS/PO Box 184/2608 SECOND AVE/SEATTLE, WA 98121)



BUCKCHERRY

"Lit Up" CD

Import cockrock, pseudo-cockrock, Sub Pop cockrock, even chicks-in-the-band cockrock are all real big with the local "punk" Fonzarellis with the cowboy shirts and unbreakable combs. Me, I ain't into irony. I can go for a dose of the real stuff - irresponsible, pro-drug, dumbfuck sleaze with a heart. This is it - transmaro cruisin', powder-snortin', tittie-fuckin', supermodel wife-beatin', all-American cockrock! Hell, yeah and a hallelujah! (DJM)

(SOME VILE CORPORATE SHIT)



BUDWISERS

"My Girlfriend's A Bonehead" 7"

Great title, I can relate. Don't let the standard-issue RAMONES pose on the cover deter you. I have a feeling the RAMONES would probably listen to this on a daily basis if they knew about it. All 4 songs are catchy as hell, and rocked out in typical European fashion, with their cool Spanish

accents adding even more to the feel of the chorus. Hunt this down. (BAM)



(No Tomorrow/Apdo. 1134 12080 CASTELLON SPAIN)

BUG CENTRAL

"The Meek Will Inherit Nothing" LP

Musically this is great, at the very least, good. I dig the melodies and the overall energy. We need more of this, next to CLIT 45, we've got none to equal it.

But I think the lyrics are true to someone's life - just not mine. So I have to question their validity. Otherwise a cool piece of wax that has 80's British Punk written all over it. (JM)

(HELEN OF OI/6 NORTHCOTE, DOCKING, KINGS LYNN, NORFOLK. PE 31 8ND, UK)



R.L. BURNSIDE

"Come On In" CD

Gizzled old blues guy with a hip dance back beat. In the vein of some of the kookier JON SPENCER material or at some times like the BEASTIE BOYS' music with MUDDY WATERS singing over it. Another one for the hipsters. The more that I listen to this, the more contrived and ridiculous it sounds. (JC)

(FAT POSSUM/PO Box 1923/Oxford, MS 38655)



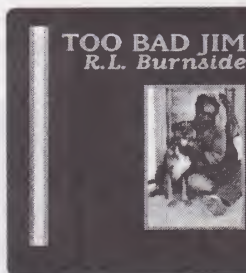
R.L. BURNSIDE

"Too Bad Jim" CD

I'm glad I get to review something I already have. R.L. BURNSIDE is one of the greatest living blues guitarists of our time. He plays dirty, crude, primitive electric blues guitar - the kind

you'd hear if you were walking in Mississippi and saw some old man playing guitar on his porch. Modern day musicians such as Jon Spencer, Beck and Tom Waits to owe much of their careers to great guitar players like Burnside. If you like the real deal raw and dirty this is for you. (TL)

(EPITAPH FAT/POSSUM RECORDS LTD Po Box 1923/Oxford, MS 38655-1923)



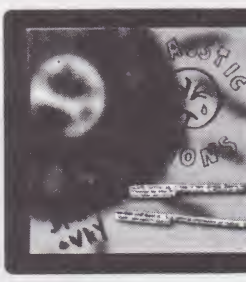
CAUSTIC NOTIONS

"I Get Blown Away" CD

Unimaginative pop punk with gruff vocals. Pretty much sounds like 80% of the other stuff I've had to review lately. It's not that this is horrible, and it's not

even that I'm hellbent on originality. It's just that after I turn this CD off, I don't remember what they sound like. (JER)

(TIPPY COASTER/14242 SPRINGER AVE./SARATOGA, CA 95070)



CAVITY

"Wounded" 7" EP

Thunderous guitars with barbaric throaty vocals. Four heavy songs that are a lurching, gut-wrenching, no!sefest. Fans of the band will want

to get this because it is the last recording with the original vocalist before he left the band. (JC)

(No/PO Box 14088/BERKELEY, CA 94712)



CHARMLESS

"Nothing Nice Rhymes With Your Name"

Solid, crunchy power-pop with a bit of an emo edge to it. The songs are generally have a

REVIEWS

melancholy bent to them, but the music itself is generally upbeat; a bit like a more musically complex, less inebriated "Let it Be"-era REPLACEMENTS. Sometimes

I even catch a bit of R.E.M. circa "Chronic Town" in the music, which certainly isn't a bad thing in my book. These guys definitely know their eighties College Rock and use the knowledge wisely. Much, much better than SIX GOING ON SEVEN, but still not quite as good as SLAYER. (DG)

(CHARMLESS/1280 15TH AVE./SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94122)

CHEATER SLICKS

"Refried Dreams" CD

The CHEATER SLICKS' best album by far. It's got enough noise and garage insanity to satisfy old fans, but Tom has learned to sing and they've made huge

musical strides as songwriters. They nail down a definitive, original, pure loser rock 'n' roll sound that any rock lifers should immediately understand. Eminently listenable and highly recommended to fans of the Australian scene. Drummer/voxist Dana finally quit his job at White Castle. (DJM)

(IN THE RED/NO ADDRESS)

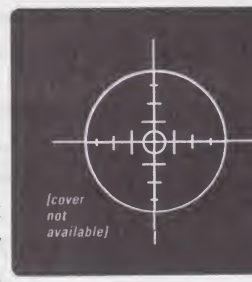


CHEVELLES

"At Second Glance" CD

The best power pop record I've heard in well over a decade. Australia's CHEVELLES have just the right combination of great pop tunes, heavy rockin' twin guitars,

and ostensible lyrical "innocence" to click, and their best material equals that of the finest exem-



SHITLIST

"She's Not Around" is one of the greatest power pop songs I've ever heard, and "Valentine", "Mesmerized", "Can't Pretend", and "Starlet" are also standout tracks. Here's one that'll make Greg Shaw and Josh Rutledge positively swoon. (JB)

(SPINNING TOP/PO Box 7716/CLOISTERS SQUARE/PERTH 6850/AUSTRALIA)

CHEVELLES

"Mesmerized" 7"

About a month ago, Jeff went up to Canada for a little over a week. When he came back, we were both excited to tell each other about this great new band we had discovered that week, the CHEVELLES. Weird coincidence, huh? These guys rule. Great rock n' roll with pop hooks all over the place. I would highly recommend buying anything you can find by this band, as the three releases that I have tracked down since I discovered them have absolutely rocked. (BAM)



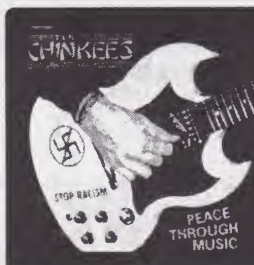
(HELLFIRE CLUB/PO Box 81/4100 ORANGE FRANCE)

CHINKEES

"Peace Through Music" CD

Wow, what a great release. I'm sincerely impressed with this. Musically, it's ska, but more of a traditional style like THE SPECIALS, with a bit of a punk hook thrown in. I rarely hear ska that I like anymore, but this is definitely an exception to the rule. THE CHINKEES are an all Asian-American group whose focus lyrically is on anti-racism. Being Asian, I felt an immediate connection to many of the bands' lyrics, but this is a release that everyone can learn from and appreciate. (AD)

(ASIAN MAN RECORDS/P.O. Box 35585/MONTE SERENO, CA 95030)



CLETUS

"Horseplay Leads To Tragedy" CD

Fairly run of the mill (though eminently enjoyable) pop-punk. At its best, it scales the heights of ALL. At its worst, it still gets the ol toe tapping....Well played, executed, and produced, and the occasional standout tune. (RK)

(JOHAN'S FACE RECORDS/PO Box 479164/CHICAGO, IL 60647)



CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE CD

This record is a compilation of 7"s from a collaboration between St. Patrick of DILLINGER FOUR (the nakedest bassist in the Twin Cities) and Aaron Cometbus (the most famous former member of CRIMPSHRIKE who wasn't in TILT and isn't nuts). And it fucking rocks. Trashed out music, great lyrics (mostly Cometbus-penned), Pat's rough vocals as well as some snotty female vox from guitarist Emily. The whole thing is over in less than a half-hour. There's a couple dodgy tracks, but songs like "Rumbleseats and Running Boards" and "P.C.M.Z.", with their PINHEAD GUN-POWDER-meets-D4 vibe, blow the doors off of anything else Lookout! (or practically anyone else) has released this year. Highly recommended. (DGJ)

(LOOKOUT/PO Box 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)



CLIT 45

"Straight Outta Long Beach" EP

The more I listen to ADD artists, I begin to hear differences in each of their own sounds. These five young men, straight outta Long Beach, seem



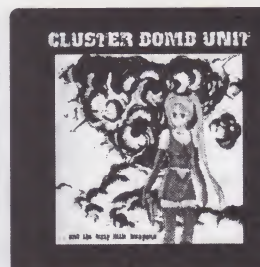
to have one themselves. Complete with all the frustrations of being young in a suburban wasteland, that, yes, Long Beach has always been. I'll say this too, these cats have been doing their homework, cause this is the sound that set Los Angeles on fire during the 80's. Listening to this, it's as if I'm at Fenders again, only this time I'm not getting my head kicked in. (JM)

(ADD RECORDS/270 CENTRAL STREET/HINGHAM, MA. 02043)

CLUSTER BOMB UNIT

"And The Dirty Little Weapons" 7" EP

Amped up apocalyptic hardcore. Not for the faint of heart. A most excellent outing for this politically intense German band. Cool cover graphics. (JC)



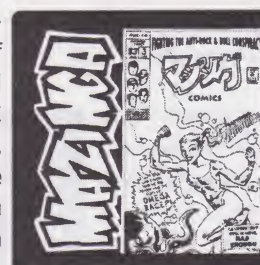
(HAVOC/PO Box 8585/MINNIAPOLIS, MN 55408)

COBRA YOUTH

"Positive Ideas For Negative Outcomes" 7"

A weird over-the-top mixture of MISFITS and ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN, with an outcome that will leave you gaspin' for air. I am looking forward to the upcoming full length. This 7" has a bunch of great songs that will hopefully hold me over until then. (BAM)

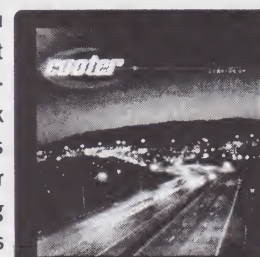
(REANIMATOR/PO Box 1582/ANN ARBOR, MI 48106)



COOTER

"Looking Up" CD

For those of you who can't get enough of 1994-vintage Fat Wreck Chords stuff, here's some COOTER for ya. There's nothing bad about this



record, other than the fact that it's a postcard from the funeral of a mostly played-out genre. The melodies are nice, the guitars are loud and fast, the drumming is tight, and mommy, I'm bored, we've done this fifteen times before, I wanna go home. I don't know. It's a solid effort for the genre. Maybe I'm just getting old, bitter, and jaded on this kind of punk - this thing is just going in one ear and out the other. (DGJ)

(FASTMUSIC/368 BROADWAY #511/NEW YORK, NY 10013)

CORE

"The Hustle Is On" CD

Surprising thing about this record is that it's not out on MAN'S RUIN. It would be perfect for them. Heavy BLACK SABBATH meets BLUE CHEER stone groove gOing on. They should play some shows with FU MANCHU. Real cool dooper music. (JC)



(MIA/TEE PEE/315 CHURCH ST. 2ND FLOOR/NY NY 10013)

CRACK

"The Best Of The Crack" CD

A prime exponent of the guitar-driven, hook-laden power-pop end of Oi/street punk. This release is somewhat redundant if you own any of their other releases, but for the uninitiated, this is a great collection from a woefully underappreciated band. (RK)



(CAPTAIN Oi/PO BOX 501/HIGH WYCOMBE/BUCKS/HP10 8QA/ENGLAND)

CRANIUM

"Speed Metal Sentence" CD

This promo CD spotlights Swedish "Speed Metal Legends," CRANIUM. It was hard to keep a straight face while listening to this because it is SO chock full of stereotypical metal hot licks. The singer can sing really high like he got kicked in the grundle, but if you're into that sort of thing, this is probably a good release for

you. The band has been around since 1985, so you gotta give them props for that. (AD)



(NECROPOLIS RECORDS/BOX 14815/FREMONT, CA 94539-4815)

CREATION

"The Singles Collection" LP

Get Back Records is again re-releasing great stuff so you don't have to pay top dollar from the asshole record dealers at the swaps. What can I say about the CREATION? They rule and are one of my faves - next to the WHO of course. Art school mods playing mod power pop in 1966. This is a singles collection of their all time greats includes the obvious hits: "Making Time", "Painter Man", "Biff Bang Pow", "Life is Just Beginning", "How Does it Feel to Feel", "Through My Eyes", etc...All this stuff was already reissued in the 80's - on Edsel Records I believe. Great for people who want the *creme de la creme* of the CREATION. Be a smarty and get this one. (TL)



(GET BACK/PIAZZA MALTONI 16 50065/PONTASSIEVE, FIRENZE, ITALY)

CRIMINALS

"Burning Flesh And Broken Fingers" CD

Another rip-roaring, snotty blast of Berkeley punk. This is the best sounding CRIMINALS release so far, overall bigger and more instrumentally clear. Cool two-part vocals on a lot of the songs. Jesse's lyrics are, as always, biting diatribes on fashion victims, drugs, scenesters, and "Corruption", reading almost like a Scene report at times, which can be equally entertaining and depressing. Keep fighting the good fight, fellas (and girl)! (JC)



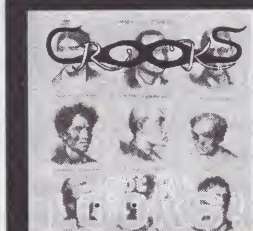
REVIEWS

(ADELINE/5337 COLLEGE AVE #318/OAKLAND, CA 94618)

CROOKS

"Got The Looks" 7" EP

What's this? Another great rock 'n' roll record from Sweden? I tell ya...I'm moving there. B side track "Do You Know What's Boss" is my personal pick of this litter. (JC)



(REALLY FUZZED/PO BOX 6170/S-10233 STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN)

CRUEL AND UNUSUAL

"Ill Gotten Gains" CD

Another one of those bands from Austin (I believe?) who seem to be making a mark in the world. Punk like this reminds me of being a kid again and the bands were simple and the lyrics entertaining. But I won't bother mentioning who they remind me of, cause someone's gonna give my review the stink eye for not agreeing with me. So I'll say this, it got a good tempo, a kick ass CD jacket, and the music is right on the money.

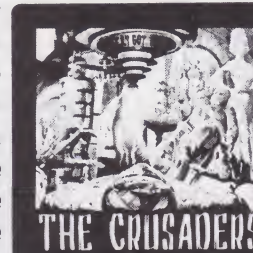


(MORTVILLE RECORDS/P.O. BOX 4263/AUSTIN, TX. 78765)

CRUSADERS

"Escar Got Got" 7" EP

Great garage/horror punk from Australia. Four fuzzy tunes that totally rock. Great titles like "I Was A Teenage Adult" and "No Brain No Pain". They have a costumed theme going on, and I love bands that have themes. (JC)



(HELLFIRE CLUB/PO BOX 81/B4100 ORANGE FRANCE)

SHITLIST

CRYSTAL ECSTASY

"Part of this Sacred Dream" CD

Finnish glam/pop trash a la SMACK and HANOI ROCKS, but not as ballsy as their punkmetal contemporaries the 69 EYES. They cover the Tony James-penned LORDS OF THE NEW CHURCH classic, "Russian Roulette", and if you're into scarves and Loreal blue/black hair dye, you'll dig 'em as much as, say, KILL CITY DRAGONS or the SOHO ROSES. They're currently looking for a new drummer, by the way. (DJM)

(MDMA Lab/PO Box 51/5F-20741 Turku/FINLAND)



CUTLASS SUPREME

"Filling Station" CDEP

What is Some Records doing? So they put out the amazing "No Division" by HOT WATER MUSIC and the BEYOND retrospective and then turn around and foist stuff like CUTLASS SUPREME and (even worse) SIX GOING ON SEVEN on us? There's nothing terribly bad about this record except for the fact that it's *incredibly* boring. The first track actually manages to get a cool noisy bit going, but this release - much like the car the band is named for - is ultimately beige and forgettable. Really nice package design though... (DGJ)

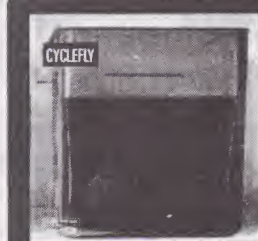
(SOME/122 W. 29 St. 4th Floor/NEW YORK NY 10001)



CYCLEFLY

"Generation Sap" CD

Find this used in the \$1.00 clearance section, because it's crap. Good for the kids who traded their



mod patches for \$95.00 used OZZY shirts and are now ever so Rock...(BB)

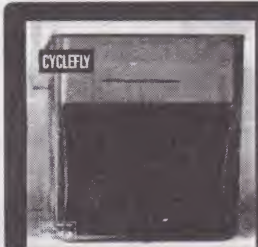
(RADIOACTIVE RECORDS/156 W. FIFTY-SIXTH/NEW YORK, NY 10019)

CYCLEFLY

"Supergod" CDEP

Alterna-crap of the STONE TEMPLE PILOTS / THIRD EYE BLIND variety. Apparently, these songs are from an upcoming LP on Radioactive records (as if I give a fuck), and this enhanced CD comes with some gay videos or something. Do I even have to tell you that this sucks ass? (JER)

(RADIOACTIVE/156 W. 56TH St./NY, NY 10019)



TOM DAILY

"Happily Deceiving Culture" CD

Nice and sweet without being annoying. A good pop album in the tradition of BIG STAR but much lighter.(BB)

(THICK RECORDS/409 N. WOLCOTT AVE./CHICAGO, IL 60622)

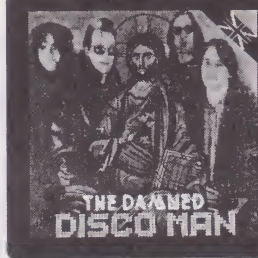


DAMNED

"Disco Man" 7"

The A-side is a live version of the title track with decent sound, and the B-side is a live cover of a SEX PISTOLS tune. Pretty disposable if you ask me, but if you're a diehard fan, you may wanna pick this up. (JER)

(SUDDEN DEATH/MOSCROP PO Box #43001/BURNABY, BC/CANADA V5G 3H0)

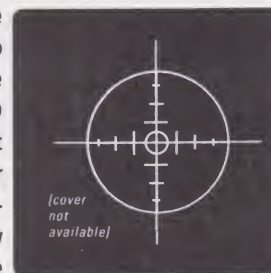


DAYGLO ABORTIONS

"Death Race 2000" CD

For years I've been clued to into the existence of the DAYGLO ABORTIONS. But like so many other bands, I never listened to them. Now I can, say, no love lost here. This isn't what I deem as good punk. Sure its snotty, loud, abrasive, and obscene, but I like to think that punk can be intelligent too. Live, this band may rock, they may even sell out everywhere they play, but the CD doesn't hit home with me.

(GOD RECORDS/PO Box 44132-3170 TILL I CUM ROAD/VICTORIA, BC, CANADA. V9A 7H7)

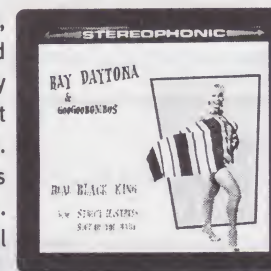


RAY DAYTONA AND GOO GOO BOMBS

"Real Black King" 7" EP

What a brilliant, lively record this is. Three fuzzy guitar tunes that are just incredible. Sounds like it was recorded in 1967. Great cover art. All around winner. (JC)

(BAD MAN/VUA ROMA 88-15040/CASTELLETO, MONF (AL) ITALY)

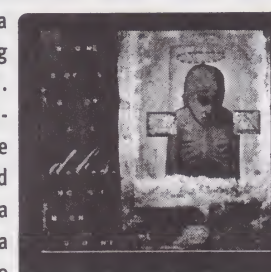


D.B.S

"i is for insignificant" CD

Debut CD by a hot young Canadian band. Energy, enthusiasm, and some accomplished tuneage make for a real ripper of a release. Tends to the more melodic/emo side of punk, just super-charged! Imagine an amped up ("Unfun"-era) JAW-BREAKER or KNAPSACK, and you'll be along the right lines. (RK)

(SUDDEN DEATH RECORDS/MOSCROP PO Box #32001/BURNABY, BC, V5G 3H0/CANADA)

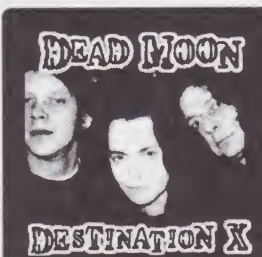


DEAD MOON

"Destination X" CD

DEAD MOON have been proudly plowing the same trashy, lo-fi, 60s-laced garage furrow for many a year, so by now you should all know what they sound like and whether you like 'em. If you're addicted to their moody, raunched-out sound, as I always have been, you'll need to pick this up to complete your collection. If not, you've got shitty taste, so you don't really matter. On this outing, the production seems even muddier than usual and there aren't nearly as many straight-up rockers, but "Down to the Dogs" is a great punker.

(EMPTY/PO Box 12034/SEATTLE, WA 98102)



DICK ARMY

"Decimate" 7"

Three beer-induced punk rock gems. Great attack on the vocals, as well as aggressive guitar playing. Worth checking out. (BAM)

(AML/PO Box 150-517/BROOKLYN, NY 11215)

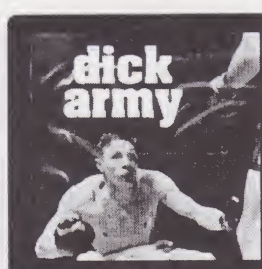


DICK ARMY

"Winners By Default" 7"

Fuzz-ridden rock & roll with gravely vocals. Not much in the way of hooks here, but if you like your rock straight forward and pissed off, then this one could be for you. (BAM)

(AML/PO Box 1503/NEW YORK, NY 10009)



DIESEL BOY

"Sofa King Cool" CD

This band is probably wondering what's up with no review in *Hit List*. After all, the damn thing came in like three issues ago. Well, if it wasn't so damn good, I would have left it in the "to be reviewed" box, instead of the "listen to everyday" pile next to my stereo. This thing smokes their first two releases. Aggressive pop-punk rock, written and executed to perfection. If you tried DIESEL BOY before and didn't like them, try it again. If you liked them before, be prepared to be blown away! (BAM)

(HONEST DON'S/PO Box 192027/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119)



DIMESTORE HALOES

"Revolt Into Style" CD

Leather jacket, spiky haired, black eyeliner wearin' punk rock n' roll that carries on the Pelado tradition of putting out high quality rock n' roll records. These guys are from Boston, but they sound like they should be in LA, playing with the STICHES and WEAKLINGS. I like it. (JER)

(PELADO/521 W. WILSON #C103/COSTA MESA, CA 92627)



DIODES

"Tired Of Waking Up Tired" CD

Along overdue reissue of material by Canada's Diodes, whose punk-pop sound got me through high school when most everyone else was listening to REO SPEEDWAGON and JOURNEY. Their first two LPs, some unreleased tracks, plus a 12-page booklet filled with info make for a tasty package. Besides the great title track, which was



REVIEWS

a minor AM radio hit in Canada, there are 24 other tracks recorded between 1977 and 1979 that true punk archivists will not want to be without. (AW)

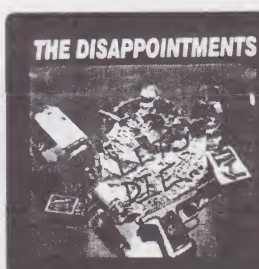
(SONY-CANADA)

DISAPPOINTMENTS

"Let's Die" 7"

Kinda like a cross between the MISFITS' sing-a-long stuff, and the 1-2, 1-2 polka beat of the QUEERS' earlier recordings (with Wimpy singing). I knew this would be good; Radio Records rarely disappoints (pardon the pun). Check it out. (JER)

(RADIO/PO Box 1452/SONOMA, CA 94576)



DISBEER

"Beer Drinkers and Hellraisers" CD EP

Me and crust punk are like, bricks and soda cans, no real connection what so ever! So I'm not sure if this is the standard for how a crust punk record is made, but the quality of the recording sucks. The vocals are hard to discern, no big deal thought. The music itself is capable of keeping my attention for a little while. Some of the tracks are good, some are not even close. But then again, what the hell do I know?

(PANX/31033 TOULOUSE/CEDEX 5 - FRANCE)



DIVIT

"Low Speed Chase" CD

Local kids who I have watched quickly grow into a formidable band. New skate rock champions. Remind me a bit of NO USE



SHITLIST

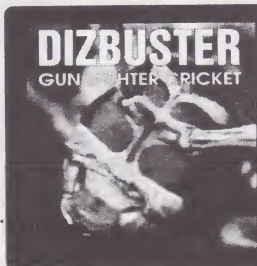
FOR A NAME. Melodic hardcore that the kids all go nuts for. I see these guys playing to a huge crowd on the main stage on Warped tour 2001. (JC)

(COLDFRONT/PO Box 8345/BERKELEY, CA 94707)

DIZ BUSTER

"Gun Lighter Cricket" CD

Pretty mediocre Scuz rock. There are a few decent moments on this. I even kind of liked "Esperanza's Bruc". That aside, this is a record that probably won't be going back in my stereo. Jeff Dahl produced, which usually is a high watermark for a project, but it doesn't seem like even he could do much for them. (JC)

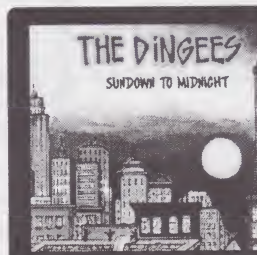


(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBERG, PA 15317)

DINGEES

"Sundown to Midnight" CD

So I mentioned to Brett one time that I happened to really like the GADJITS. So now I'm apparently the guy who gets the ska records. So here's a ska-punk combo with an occasional vaguely political lyric, some fairly distorted guitar parts, and an incredible lack of energy. I mean, yeah, they play fast and fairly tight, but if I'm gonna listen to a ska record, it better fucking kick me in the ass. There's nothing horrendous about this record other than its mediocrity. They're no OPIV, that's for sure. Hell, they might not even be REEL BIG FISH. Okay, sorry, that was kinda exceedingly cruel... (DGJ)



(BEC/810 3RD STREET, STE. 140/SEATTLE, WA 98104)

DM3

"Just Like Nancy" 7"EP

Heavy doses of BIG STAR and late 70's british pop like NICK LOWE come to mind listening to this. A little to over produced and sugary sweet for my taste. (JC)



(HELLFIRE CLUB/PO Box 81/84100 ORANGE FRANCE)

D.O.A.

"Festival Of Athiests" LP

Wow. Talk about a band that never lost track of the punk spirit or energy. These guys have been around since pretty much day one and they are still putting out shredding music with hard hitting political lyrics. Songs like "Death To The Multinationals" and "Brainwashed" could easily be off of classic records like "War on 45" or "Bloodied and Unbowed" - instead they are on a 1999 release. Joey Shithead doesn't look like he's going to stop until you pry the guitar out of his cold, dead hands. I really dug the back cover painting as well. (JC)



(SUDDEN DEATH/PO Box 43001/BURNABY, BC V5G 3H0, CANADA)

DODGE THE DEATHRAY

"You Am, You Ain't" CDEP

Pretty standard pop punk with growley (and often out of tune), CRIMPSPHINEish vocals. This really isn't that bad, but there's nothing to make it stand out from the sea of competitors. Just kinda there. (JER)

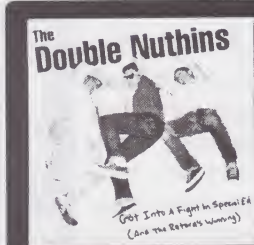


(REFRIED/856 ROOSEVELT ST./WEST HEMPSTEAD, NY 11552)

DOUBLE NUTHINS

"Got Into A Fight In Special Ed" 7"

After hearing the first notes of this bad boy, I expected to turn the sleeve over and see the Rip Off Records label. It'll probably be on their next release.



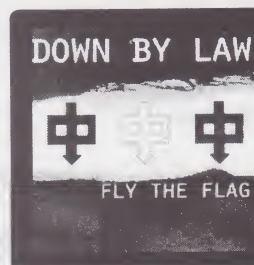
Amazing trashed out garage rock 'n' roll, filled with snot and coated with classic lyrics. Go buy this. (BAM)

(RAPID PULSE/PO Box 5075/MILFORD, CT 06460)

DOWN BY LAW

"Fly The Flag" CD

As is the case with most DBL records, this is mixed. It seems with each release, they slip further down the "indie rock" slope, but there are some pretty cool tunes. I especially liked the Irish flavored (there's even [what sounds like] a tin whistle) "Breakout". And hey, what's up with the new label? When bands split ways with Epitaph, they usually turn up on MTV, but that's not the case here. Hmmm. (JER)

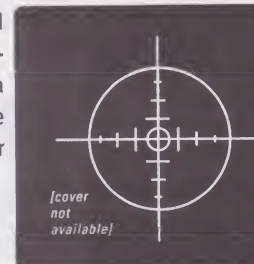


(GO KART/PO Box 20/PRINCE STREET STATION/NY, NY 10012)

DRAGS

"I Killed Rock And Roll/Blacklight" 7"

Take the FALL and LOVE AND ROCK-ETS, garage it up a bit and you get the DRAGS. Great cover art too. (BB)



(EMPTY RECORDS/PO Box 12034/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

DRAGSTRIP 77

"Sin City Hot Rods" CD

Looking at the cover I thought I wouldn't like this at all. Pretty generic - typical hot rod, rawkabilly cover. You know, dice, flames, and the ace of spades, yawn. I have to say though this cd smokes, great authentic rockabilly with hints of EDDIE COCHRAN, RONNIE DAWSON, DALE HAWKINS with a smidge of HANK WILLIAMS thrown in. My fav trax are "Daisy Dukes" and "Blue Shadows". The best I've heard in awhile of this sorta thing. Definitely sticking to the roots. Thumbs Up!! (TL)

(DIONYSUS/PO Box 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)

DREAMCHILD

"Gates to the Sea" CD

Outstanding ethereal music, masterfully crafted by a prog-rock guitar genius and an otherworldly goddess with a multi-octaved, chilling set of pipes. Goth for grown-ups that fans of vintage DEAD CAN DANCE, DIAMANDA GALAS, and "Ashes"-era CHRISTIAN DEATH should appreciate. (DJM)

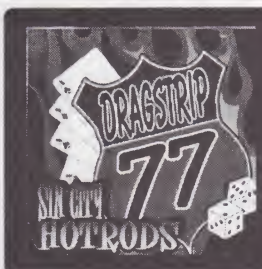
(DREAMCHILD/955 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE #252/CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139)

DS-13

"Aborted Teen Generation" EP

This is a reissue of the Busted Head Records release. I'm glad this record was re-released, as there are far too many people missing out on this band - including me! I don't know what it is with Swedish bands, but it's rare to find a bad one. This record is raging, fast, and pissed. (AD)

(HAVOC RECORDS/P.O. Box 8585/MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55408)



DUFUS

"This Revolution" CD

The name don't lie. This is the type of band that, when you decide to try a new bar and there's a really scary crappy band playing to about 2 of their girlfriends, you run the fuck out 'cause it's beyond tolerable and drink forties in the park. (BB)

(OPULENCE/PO Box 2071/WILMINGTON, NC 28402)

EARLY HOURS

"Evolution" Double 7" EP

Quite an extensive project. Double 7" on different colored vinyl with a six page booklet. Full version of their new record; 12 songs in all, made available for record collector fanatics. Power pop that reminds me of an Australian PLIMSOUls or the poppier JAM songs. (JC)

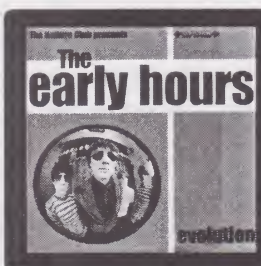
(HELLFIRE CLUB/PO Box 81/84100 ORANGE FRANCE)

EJECTED

"The Best Of The Ejected" CD

It's incredible to think that back in the early 80s, the EJECTED were largely considered a bit of a joke; or at best, a second rate punk/Oi band. Yet in retrospect, and especially given the current sad American imitation of what is claimed now to be 'street' punk, they sound pretty good. Their later material certainly benefitted from the addition of a second guitarist, and a more beefed up UK SUBSish sound. Fans of said 'street' punk ought to love this. (RK)

(CAPTAIN Oi/PO Box 501/HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCCS, HP10 8QA/ENGLAND)



REVIEWS

ELVIS DISCIPLES/HATE MAIL

"Double Penetration" SPLIT 7"

It's crap, but it's energetic young crap. I bet they had a blast doing it. Suffers mostly from immaturity. HATE MAIL's "I love Girls" is the high point on an overall dismal record. (JC)

(CHURCH BINGO TERRORISM/PO Box 5160/WHITTIER, CA 90607)



ERRORTYPE: 11

"The Crank! E.P." CDEP

Treading much of the same ground as SIX GOING ON SEVEN, but doing a better job of it, come ERRORTYPE: 11. It's fairly soft, occasionally rocking noise-pop stuff with a cool cover design. How many of you are screaming "EMOI!" yet? But it's not quite as bad as all that. It's actually a pretty pleasant little record. A pleasant little record to sink into your couch to with a bottle of Jim Beam on a sunny Tuesday afternoon and smoke cigarettes until they don't work anymore. Actually, it's kind of putting me in that mood right now, but it's Friday and I've got too much to do, so I think I'll listen to IRON MAIDEN instead. (DGJ)

(CRANK!/1223 WILSHIRE BLVD. #823/SANTA MONICA, CA 90403-5400)



E-TOWN CONCRETE

"F\$ck The World" CD

This band is trying to mesh metal with hip hop and while that may sound like an interesting combination, the result really sucks. Ridiculously lame



SHITLIST

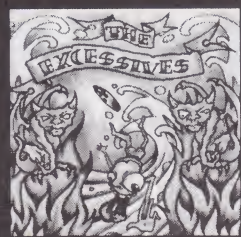
tough guy lyrics and vocals. (AD)

(RESURRECTION A.D. RECORDS/P.O. Box 763/RED BANK, NJ 07701)

EXCESSIVES

"Nothing Or Me" CD

Rich, throaty Rvocal backed by chunky guitars and plenty of attitude. Big tough music and lyrics that suggest that the singer has been around the block a few times. Compare to J.F.A. or DR. KNOW. Good classic punk sound. Extra points for being the first record I've seen that thanks *Hit List* in their credits. (JC)



(ABSOLUTE MUSIC/15550 RUSSEL AVENUE/WHITEROCK, B.C. CANADA)

EYELID

"Conflict's Invitation" CD

The way EYELID goes back and forth from solid hardcore to softer melodic harmonies reminds me of SOUL-SIDE in a weird way. The band does a good job of blending the different styles. Interesting lyrics that are at times obscure in their meaning yet seem to focus on personal issues colliding with societal influences. Great sounding recording.



(INDECISION RECORDS/P.O. Box 5781/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92615)

FALL SILENT

"Superstructure" CD

This is definitely one of the best records to come out in 1999. Reno's FALL SILENT play an excellent mix of thrash and hard-core-influenced



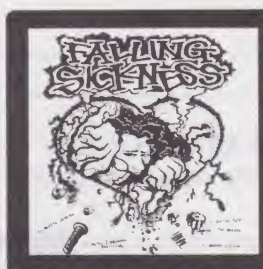
metal that is thick, heavy and intelligent - yet not so serious that they can't have fun throwing in some keyboards, a little hip hop, and covering of all things, a JOURNEY song! This band is extremely underrated. Treat yourself to this CD - you won't regret it! (AD)

(REVOLUTIONARY POWER TOOLS/P.O. Box 15051/RENO, NV 89507)

FALLING SICKNESS / DYSENTERY

Split CD

FALLING SICKNESS plays political hardcore punk-ska that just bores the pants off me. I'm sure they've got a good message and all (portions of the proceeds of this record go to build schools in Chiapas, Mexico), but I just can't get into the music. DYSENTERY plays much the same as FS, but without the ska element. The info here is done really well. They give you the history and background facts on the Schools For Chiapas project in a straightforward, easy to read fashion. It's for a good cause, so if you're into these bands, you should pick this up. (JER)



(SUB CITY/PO Box 7495/VAN NUYS, CA 91409)

FID

"What's Your Poison" CD

This reminds me of a slower version of LEATHER-FACE. I hear a lot of favorable sounds in this, Hardcore, Pop, Oi like choruses, and a trademark American punk sound that bands like MINOR THREAT, the US BOMBS, and early BAD RELIGION help define. I thought the lyrics were smart and well compiled. The best bet for a band like this is to go tour! (JM)



(No Address)

59 TIMES THE PAIN

"End of the Millenium" CD

Wow! These Swedes may take their name from a HÜSKER DÜ song, but musically they come across as a strong hybrid of RANQD and SICK OF IT ALL. "Turn at 25th" may be the best melding of streetpunk and hardcore I've ever heard. The rest of the album is pretty solid as well. My only gripe is that lyrically they're stuck in the standard HC/Streetpunk themes of "Hooray for the Working Man" and "We're All in This Together, Punx." But hey, they're Scandanavian - if you asked me to come up with something meaningfully literate in another language, I probably couldn't do it either. With that caveat, I'd heartily recommend this to fans of either HC or streetpunk, especially since it doesn't have that annoying "No Guitars/Too Much Vocals" mix problem that Nørb lamented a couple issues back. Good stuff.

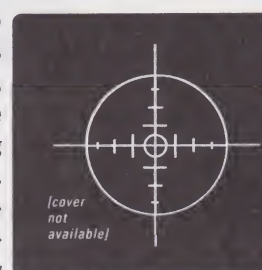


(BURNING HEART/Box 441. 701 48/ÖREBRO, SWEDEN)

FILLIBUSTER

"Deadly Hi-fi" CD

What did I do to deserve this lame-ass Live 105 crap? Why are we even reviewing this? It's not punk. It's not even independent. It's pseudo-dub frat boy SUBLIME sounding crap. I can't believe I had to waste time listening to this. (JER)



(PMB/6285 E SPRING St./LONG BEACH, CA 90808)

FLAMING SIDEBURNS

"It's Time To Testify Brothers And Sisters" CD

Great name, fun band. The Swedes do it again. Not quite as heavy as TURBONEGRO, twice as much fun as ABBA. Sound a



REVIEWS

little like **ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT**. Damn cool record. Let's get these guys out here to play, I bet their live show rules. (JC)

(BAD AFRO/POSTE RESTRANTE, FREDRICKSBURG, ALL'E 6/DK-1820/FREDRICKSBURG, DENMARK)

FLOWERZ

"Flyte/I Need Love Now" 7"

Get Hip archives series capture two absolute psych-pop gems. Archtypical garage rock that was nice and syrupy sweet. "Flyte" being one on the best tunes to come out of that scene. (JC)



(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBERG, PA 15317)

FORCED REALITY

"Never Forget" CD

A re-release of the 1986 self-styled 'skinhead rocknroll' LP. It's certainly really fucking stupid. If nothing else, a timely reminder of how crassly dumb human beings are actually capable of - and indeed, not embarrassed about publicising the fact either. Plodding rock music. The singer had a nice (!?) Ian Stewart type growl. I'm sure these guys thought that SKREW-DRIVER were really kind of cool too. Probably not when they were a glam band, but, yknow, when they were 'real' skins. And whatever happens to 'real' skins when they, er, well, stop being skins? (RK)



(TAANGI/706 PISMO CT, SAN DIEGO, CA 92109)

FOUR LETTER WORD

"Zero Visibility" CD

Wales has made it mark in the world once again, move over TOM JONES. This is some of the best stuff I've heard out of everything given to me to review. It's got all the elements I look for in punk today. Originality, smart lyrical content, and a great sound that's all there own. Now I'll

draw comparisons to **CHELSEA**, **MAD PARADE**, and even **BIG COUNTRY**, but these are just in their delivery. This is the kind of stuff that keeps me going in the world of punk. (JM)

(BYO/PO Box 67A64/LOS ANGELES, CA. 90067)

FOXYMORONS

"Calcutta" CD

This is really nice pop. A sweater boy and a cowboy shirt boy get together and make a good record. XTC influences represented but not at all copycatish. (BB)

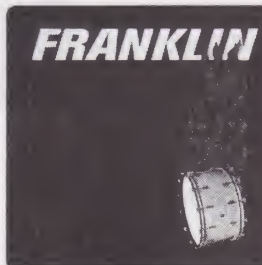


(AMERICAN POP PROJECT/PO Box 2271/SAN RAFAEL, CA 94912)

FRANKLIN

"They Attack" CD

Quirky, 80's influenced indie rock, if that makes any sense. Sort of like FUGAZI crossed with the **PIXIES**. I guess that makes even less sense. But damnit, I like the **PIXIES** and I like **FRANKLIN**. Definitely a change from my usual listening, but I'll keep it around for awhile. (JER)

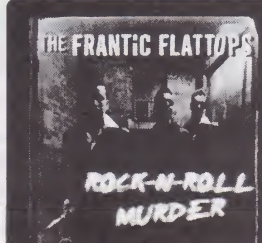


(TREE/PO Box 578582/CHICAGO, IL 60657)

FRANTIC FLATTOPS

"Rock + Roll Murder" CD

Nicely done uptempo rockabilly with a scandalous hint of swing. Two musical styles that are more



than played out right now. These pickers, however, stand apart from the pack with a road-grizzled authenticity and catchy hooks that show real personality. (JC)

(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBERG, PA 15317)

FRENZAL RHOMB

"A Man's Not A Camel" CD

Can't argue with the wisdom inherent in the title. Can't argue with the music either. All I can think of really, to describe their very full and varied sound and stylings,



is a more laidback (most be that Australian sun leaking through the hole in the ozone) NOFX, or perhaps SNUFF in some of their wackier moments. Anyone/everyone who loves pop-punk, melodic hardcore and more with lots of added twists will dig this. (RK)

(FAT WRECK CHORDS/PO Box 193690/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119)

FROM ASHES RISE

7"

Awesome D.I.Y. Hardcore release from Memphis! Compelling and forceful, reminds me at times of **DEAD AND GONE**. Besides, seven songs on a 45 shouldn't be passed up! (AD)



(PARTNERS IN CRIME/PO. Box 820043/MEMPHIS, TN 38182)

F.Y.P./CHANIWA

"Hey Gorbie" Split CD

Another in the split series that pairs popular American punk bands with Japanese bands of the same ilk. F.Y.P play thrashy, snotty pop punk. I think this is officially their unpteenth release. Songs are great, special favorite for me is "18 and Tweaked" Chaniwa are a bit more polished and

SHITLIST

refined. Their songs are instantly catchy, and I anxiously await hearing them again. (JC)



(SUBURBAN HOME/1750 30TH ST. #365/BOULDER, CO 80301)

GARLIC BOYS "Love" CD

The only comparison I can come up with for this band is the FUN PEOPLE from Argentina. Not that they sound like them, just that they too defy categorization. No two songs on this disc sound like they came from the same band. It's pretty wacked out stuff. Check 'em out if you're the experimental type. (JER)



(HOWLING BULL/PO Box 40129/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94140)

GARLIC BOYS "Poem" CD

Crazed Japanese punk band jumping all over the place from skate rock, hardcore, thrash, pop, even throwing in some spaghetti western country influence. Overall, a seemingly very silly album. These guys probably put on an amazing live show. I'm sure that if I could understand the lyrics, they would probably be pretty damn funny. (JC)



(HOWLING BULL/PO Box 40129/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94140-0129)

GET UP KIDS "Something To Write Home About" CD

You know how there's always this one band that everyone tells you you should listen to

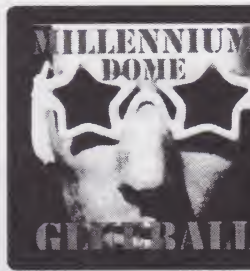
and they play shows all the time and you never bother going and you never quite get around to hearing them? That's how the GET UP KIDS were for me. Well,

now that I've heard them, I can report that all of the hype isn't justified. It's not that they're bad - in fact, if they hadn't been built up so much over the last two years, I'd probably really enjoy them, though I doubt they'd be my favorite band. I don't know, they sorta run the cutesy side of things sometimes, which for some reason I can tolerate in doses from the PROMISE RING, but that's about it. There's some interesting stuff going on musically, but all in all, it doesn't totally rock me. Maybe I'm just getting old and bitter, but I want some ROCK with my heartache, baby! (DG)

(VAGRANT/PMB #361/2118 WILSHIRE BLVD./SANTA MONICA, CA 90403)

GLUEBALL "Millennium Dome" 7"

Fast paced, snotty as hell punk n' roll. The only lyrics in the title track are "2000 bricks up your ass!", and it only gets better from there. A real fun ride on the Fuck You Express. (BAM)



(BOMBED-OUT/NO ADDRESS)

GO FASTER NUNS "Touch Me" 7"

I must admit that I thought this would be some emo/indie rock crap based on the sissy layout and the pictures of the band. Imagine my surprise when the needle dropped and my speakers almost blew with screaming guitars and attacking vocals. This thing smokes. 4 rock n' roll songs, with a hint of the BEATLES in the songwriting, but nothing but balls in the delivery. I guess you should never



judge a book (or record) by its cover. Limited to 500 copies.

(EAT THE BEAT/LEIPZIGER STR. 3/90491 NUMBERG GERMANY)

GONADS "Oi...Back And Barking" CD

Gary Bushell was always a wanker. When he created "Oi" (purely a figment of his fetid overimagination) he was a member of the International



Socialists, and a journalist at 'Sounds' (who, surprise surprise, benefitted greatly from this coverage of a new youth trend). He went rapidly rightwards, and is now a journalist at 'The Sun' - a notorious right-wing, homophobic, xenophobic comic, masquerading as a newspaper (imagine the 'National Enquirer' with an unhealthy dose of highly opinionated, and completely undisguised nationalism and racism). The GONADS were always a joke 'all-star' band, with arsehole on vocals, and various sundry members of the BUSINESS et al backing. This latest incarnation is a similar caricature. At least HARD SKIN are a 'joke' band who actually fucking rock. An embarrassment. (RK)

(CAPTAIN Oi/PO Box 501/HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA/ENGLAND)

GORDON "Fortified Grapes" CD

What a festering bag of shite. Why are we (the inclusive, part of the organization, corporate we) reviewing such mainstream garbage. Limp, insipid, desperate wannabe 'alterna-rockers'. About as ballsy as a stuffed chicken. I really hope this fails. I'm pretty sure it will. There is some justice in the world. (RK)



(SONY)

GOT MILF?
"Got Milf?" CD

Jeff has this rule where if a record doesn't have a title, we're supposed to use the first song as one, but I just couldn't, in good conscience, call this thing "Bonnie's On The Rag Again", which is the unfortunately titled opener here. This thing is totally self-produced and released, and the sound quality is pretty bad, but the music itself isn't bad at all. You can tell these kids worship SCREECHING WEASEL; "Stevie's Got A Rectum Now" is a total rip-off of "Murder In The Brady House." They sing about pretty stupid shit (as evident by the above song titles) and the cover art is in really bad taste, but this is a pretty enjoyable listen. (JER)

(223 COLONNADE DR. APT.23/CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22903)

GRIZLY GHOSTS OF GUY
"I Am The Haunted" 7" EP

Cool record. Great horror show cover. Reminds me of an early NECROS mixed with some sixties psych. Stand out track is "Kill The Hippies" which has a good freakout feel and obvious sentimental value in its lyrics. (JC)

(BRONX CHEER/PO Box 13/GLASGOW, SCOTLAND G12 8YT)

GROVER
"The Dooks'll Work It Out" 7"

Crackle! heads in a new direction here. More of a melodic hardcore, as opposed to the great pop punk that they usually crank out. I'm sure they couldn't care less about my opinion, but I can't say that I approve. Below average, even for this type of music. (BAM)

(CRACKLE!/PO Box 7/DOTLEY LS21 1YB ENGLAND)



GUY SMILEY
"Alkaline" CD

I don't really know what to say about this band. They're Canadian (plus), they have a song dedicated to "The Kids" (minus - unless you're Jimmy Pursey), their guitarist is obviously a fan of Stephen Egerton (plus), they can't quite decide what style of punk they want to play (minus). The reason I nail them for indecision is the same one I use to nail their Canadian cohorts GOB: it doesn't sound seamless or effortless enough to be genre-blending, it simply sounds like they can't find a sound of their own. As with so many records we get for review, this band's main crime is proficient mediocrity. Pass. (DGJ)

(DEVIL DOLL/PO Box 30727/LONG BEACH, CA 90853)

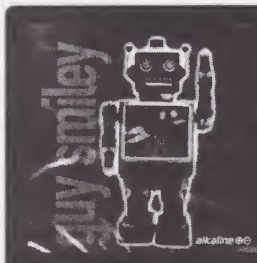
HALFWAYS
"(She's a) Heart Attack" 7" EP

Straightforward, kick-you-in-the-teeth 77 punk rock, with an emphasis on the rock. This is the third HALFWAYS EP, and I especially liked "What I Want" and "Ain't Much To Do". There's nothing radically new to be found here, but it sounds mighty fine to these ears (thanks in part to ex-DEVIL DOG Steve Baise's crude production). (JB)

(BIG NECK/PO Box 8144/RESTON, VA 20195)

HATE BOMBS
"Hunt You Down"

Garage rock super demons the HATE BOMBS are back with 12 cool new tunes and 2 covers. Fun safari and girlie themes. Smokin' guitar, swank vocals and snappy tunes make



REVIEWS

for a cool party CD. (JC)

(DIONYSUS/PO Box 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)

HEAD AND THE HAIRS
"Try To Forget" CD

Honey-dipped garage rock from Italy. I don't know anything about this band. They sound and look like their from 1966 or '67, but with modern day exactness in garage stylings its hard to tell. A definite kinship to LOVE or the BYRDS with a strong folkie feel to it. (JC)

(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

HEARTDROPS
"East Side Drive" CD

Somewhere between SCREECHING WEASEL and SOCIAL DISTORTION lies THE HEARTDROPS. Pop punk with rockabilly roots, and I can dig it, man. This is a pleasant surprise, since the packaging has them all dolled up, looking like an MTV cute boy band, but they're far from it. Pick this up. (JER)

(MELTED/21-41 34TH AVE. STE. 10A/ASTORIA, NY 11106)

HELLNATION
"Fucked Up Mess" CD

This is HELLNATION's fourth full-length release and the years haven't slowed these guys down one bit! From start to finish this is a frantic wall of



SHITLIST

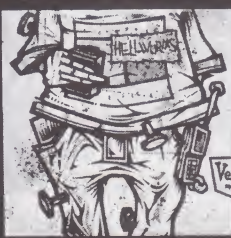
absolutely inhuman! He plays ultra rapid and manages to keep up with screaming duties, as well. Whining drummers, take notes! (AD)

(SOUND POLLUTION/P.O. Box 17742/COVINGTON, KY 41017)

HELLWORMS

"Best Laid Plans" 7"

Soundwise, these guys are all over the place. I think the best song I've ever hear them do is on this release - "Glamorous Drug Problem". Sort of an upbeat DOA-style rocker. The rest of their songs tend to bounce around to several other styles of music, most of which are reminiscent of their main record label, Alternative Tentacles, which means they're very hit or miss. Your call. (BAM)



(VERY SMALL/PO Box 12839/GAINESVILLE, FL 32604)

HIGHWAY 13

"Thrill Show" CD

Marginally dull attempt at rockabilly. Not bad - just goes nowhere. This style is so played out right now. It's hard to sift thru the enormous pile of duds to find something fresh and original. (JC)



(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

JOHN HOLMES

"El Louso Suavo" CD

Overly metalish instrumentation with emotionally gnarled vocals. Lyrics like "Cancer in my bowels, eating me away" exemplify the apoc-

john holmes



"El Louso Suavo"

lyptic nature of this release. Mostly too metal for my taste. Too many musical liberties being taken, especially on the part of the noodly bass player. (JC)

(FLAT EARTH/PO Box 169 BRADFORD/BD1 2UJ UK)

TERRI HOOLEY

"Big Time" CD EP

A 3-track CD by Terri Hooley, a longtime rock 'n' roll scenemaker in Northern Ireland. After playing a role in Belfast's mid-60's rock underground, he went on to found the stupendous Good Vibrations label, one of the most important punk, pop punk, and power pop labels of the late 70s and early 80s. On this brand new semi-novelty record, backed by some former punk luminaries, he sings along to entertaining versions of RUDI's terrific "Big Time", P.F. SLOAN's "Sins of the Family", and another cover, "Red Cadillac and a Black Moustache". The "Big Time" cover is surprisingly good, despite Hooley's rather eccentric voice. (JB)

(IMMORTAL RECORDINGS IRELAND/PO Box 283/BELFAST BT7 3AF/UNITED KINGDOM)

TERRIHOOLEY



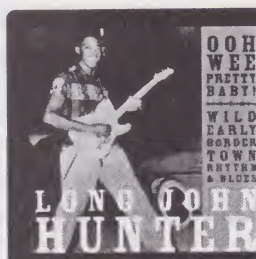
BIGTIME

LONG LOHN HUNTER

"Ooh Wee Pretty Baby!" CD

The king of Tex-Mex guitar, or what he himself called "happy blues", LONG JOHN HUNTER was a great musician; a legendary figure in the south of the border club "The Lobby", which he played in weekly for over a decade, excepting when he toured with the likes of ETTA JAMES. Still playing to this day, this CD is a collection of all his early recordings. (JC)

(NORTON/Box 646/COOPERSTATION NY 10276)

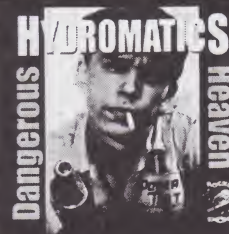


HYDROMATICS

"Dangerous" 7"

Produced by our very own Tony Slug, and damn it sounds good. Somewhere between WAYNE KRAMER and the more rockin' FLUF material is where this sound floats. The A-side takes the cake, but they are both solid listens. (BAM)

(ROCKET DOG/PO Box 70397/1007 KJ AMSTERDAM HOLLAND)

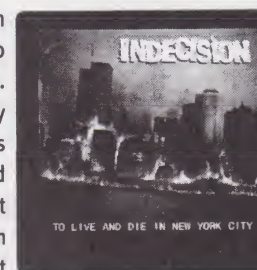


INDECISION

"To Live and Die in New York City" CD

This CD is an exceptional slab of metal-hardcore. With so many bands doing this style now, it's hard to find a band that truly stands out on their own, but INDECISION do. This release is their first with new vocalist, Artie Philie, from MILHOUSE. Introspective and smart lyrics. Also, the fact that the band has a female guitarist is a bonus as there aren't enough of them represented in hardcore. (AD)

(EXIT/P.O. Box 263/NEW YORK, NY 10012)

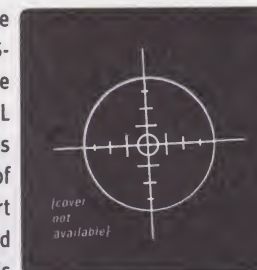


INITIAL STATE

"Abort the Soul" CD reissue

Rising from the ashes of ANTIS-CHISM came the short-lived INITIAL STATE. This CD is punishing chunk of hardcore from start to finish. I'm glad Prank reissued this as far too many people were missing out on this excellent band. Brutal and severe. Excellent "politically-correct" packaging (no jewel case, cardboard cover), too. (AD)

(PRANK RECORDS/P.O. Box 410892/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94141-0892)



IOWA HAWKEYES

"Hung From The Tassel" 7"

Heavy as hell pissed off hardcore punk rock. This seems to be a record that's put together well enough, with songs that are straight forward enough, that people into rock, punk, hardcore, and Oi would probably eat this thing up. That's both an accomplishment and a rarity! (BAM)

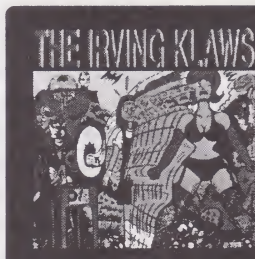


(CARBON CYCLE/PO Box 11741/PORTLAND, OR 97211)

IRVING KLAWS

"The Pervasonic Sounds of" CD

The IRVING KLAWS hmmm...obviously got their name from the fetish photographer himself. Anyways, good mixture of garage, surf, rockabilly and psychobilly. The Klawls call it PERVASONIC sound. The REVEREND HORTON HEAT, THE CRAMPS, LIGHTNING BEATMAN, DEAD-BOLT and a little FRANKIE STEIN come to mind. Great for monster, spooky, kinky, perverted rock 'n' rollers. Not bad; give it a listen! (TL)



(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

JACKIE PAPERS

"I'm In Love" CD EP

The snotty brilliance of ex-PINK LINCOLNS frontman Chris Barrow is back with a new band and six new tunes. A little more rock than the aforementioned. The songs are cool, but what really makes them are the fantastically sardonic, low-brow lyrics. Great lines like "Crip Girl"'s "Girl I know you don't know me, but I wanna be your homey". (JC)



(PANIC BUTTON/PO Box 148010/CHICAGO, IL 60614-8010)

JACKPOT/L.E.S. STITCHES

"Electric Live" CD

Rampaging live sets from two premiere punk bands, both heavily entrenched in the '77 style. JACKPOT is closer to the DEAD BOYS vein, as L.E.S. STITCHES are more on the British side of the coin. Solid sets by both bands. If this was a fight, I'd pick L.E.S. STITCHES to win, because they deliver a harder one-two punch. (JC)



(ONE FOOT/PO Box 30666/LONG BEACH, CA 90853)

JEWWS

"Heartbreaker" 10"EP

Everybody is talkin' about the JEWWS, and now I know why. Along with the REDS, The JEWWS are keeping the Lone Star State head and shoulders above the other 49. Hot chick on the cover - which always gets me excited, but this also has eight excellent songs of garagey music. I hate using that term, but in this case, it fits. There's not a bad song in the bunch (though I could do without the instrumental) the best two being "Heartbreaker", & The Shakes". Get this - it smokes like a Cancerman!!



(REMEDIAL/NO ADDRESS)

JOHNNIES

"12 Steps To Nowhere" LP

Here's the thing; these guys rock, but I can't tell if they're sexist jerks, or just a bit on the immature side. If it's the latter, I'd say pick this up, because this really is some top notch pop punk in the proud tradition of the QUEERS. The vinyl itself is awesome too. The damn LP's gotta be a quarter inch thick. Must've cost a ton to mail (especially from



REVIEWS

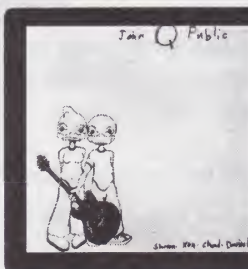
Germany), plus it's hand numbered and limited to 1,000. I'm not gonna delve too far into the lyrics, because I don't wanna ruin it for myself, but if you're wary of such things, you'll probably want to steer clear. (JER)

(ALIEN SNATCH/DANIEL BOUCHE, MORIKWEG 1/74199 UNTERGRUPPENBACH, GERMANY)

JOHN Q. PUBLIC

"The Neverending Why" CD

Fat Wreckish melodic hardcore comparable to PROPAGANDHI, but with way weaker vocals. I can't tell if it's political or not, since there's no lyric sheet. You'd think if they had something to say, they'd include the lyrics. These guys sound talented & all, but with all the bands out there that sound like this, you have to be really good to grab my attention, and this just isn't doing it for me. (JER)



(MIDDLE MAN/PO Box 4606/LAFAYETTE, IN 47903)

JOHN'S CHILDREN

"Smashed Blocked" LP

Man! Get Back has the thickest vinyl I've seen today. It's thick like old records! It's awesome!!! This re-release is JOHN'S CHILDREN (Marc Bolan's prior band to T-REX). Some of this stuff was already released on the Bam Curuso record label in the 80's. This compilation has all the greats like "Smashed Blocked", "Just What You Want, Just What You'll Get", and the goofy "Strange Affairs". It also includes the BBC recordings "Come Play With Me in the Garden", "Daddy Rolling Stone" and many more. Great compilation, great liner notes by Andy Ellison and awesome b/w photos that i've never seen before. (TL)



(GET BACK PIAZZA MALTONI, 16 50065 PONTASSIEVE FIRENZE, ITALY)

SHITLIST

JON COUGAR CONCENTRATION CAMP

"Hot Shit" CD

JCCC have long excelled at the 'young, loud, and snotty' school of driven pop-punk. This latest outing is no different. SCREECHING WEASELesque, with

a dash of DILLINGER FOUR in all its glorious, amped-up melody-with-guts. Snap this one up. (RK)

(BYO/PO Box 67A64/LOS ANGELES, CA 90067)



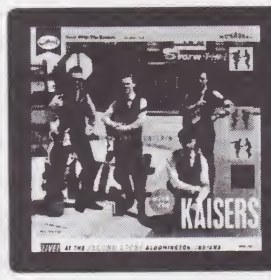
KAISERS

"Twist with the Kaisers" CD

If you don't yet know about the KAISERS - the greatest beat band of today - you're lame!! They mine that Hamburg-era, early BEATLES sound - think THE

LORDS, CASEY JONES and the GOVERNORS, THE BOOTS etc...This CD is a live recording from the Second Story Club in Bloomington, Indiana in June of '98. Now you can all here how smoking the KAISERS really are. They do all the hits like "She's Gonna Two Time", "That's my girl", "Dizzy Miss Lizzy", "Shake and Scream" and so many more. The KAISERS rule!!

(SPINOUT RECORDS/705 FARRELL RD/NASHVILLE TN 37230)



KODIAK

"Kodiak" CD

Quirky record, brimming with energy. First I'm thinking it sounds like FUGAZI then they twist it all up and it conjurs up images old MEAT



PUPPETS. I'm sure KODIAK will be a big indie rock buzz band real soon. (JC)

(ONE LOUDER/PO Box 1 NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, NE 99 1NW)

KUNG FU RICK

"motivation to abuse" LP

Wow, blasting hardcore chaos from Chicago! I'm kind of bummed on the lack of a lyric sheet, since they're playing too fast to catch what they're saying, but the record sounds great. The live show is good, too. (AD)

(625 RECORDS/P.O. Box 423413/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94142-3413)

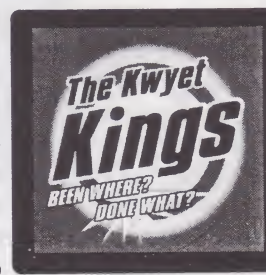


KWYET KINGS

"Been Where? Done What?" CD

Jeff and I would have been squabblin' over who was going to get to review this, but fortunately his Coke (A-Cola) problem got the best of him and he had to go downstairs to get his fix, thus leaving me upstairs digging through the heaps of "to be reviewed" records with no competition around. This CD blows my mind. Very reminiscent of good FLAMIN' GROOVIES, or the poppier REAL KIDS, with a healthy dash of mid era BOYS just for good measure. The recording and production is also of a similar sound to those aforementioned bands. Highly recommended! (BAM)

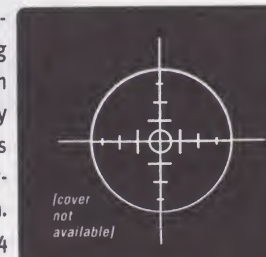
(DIONYSUS/PO Box 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)



LACK OF INTEREST

"Trapped Inside" LP

Finally! This brutally punishing band has been around for nearly ten years and this is their first, long-awaited full length. The album has 24



songs on it, which should give you some indication of what they sound like, but if I had to sum it up in one word, I would say, "depraved". The songs are short, fast, and to the point. LACK OF INTEREST is extremely under-appreciated. Get this album! (AD)

(SLAP A HAM RECORDS/P.O. Box 420843/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94142-0843)

LAWRENCE ARMS

"A Guided Tour Of Chicago" CD

Let me reiterate my feelings about the way that Asian Man does promo; IT FUCKING SUCKS. No cover, no tray card, no jewel box, no info, no nothin'. Just a CD

in a plastic bag. I'm going to assume (since there's not a shred of info on this band) that this is the former lead singer of THE BROADWAYS and SLAPSTICK, because, well, he sounds exactly the same (kind of a Blake from JAWBREAKER / Jeff from FIFTEEN hybrid, but still distinctive), plus they were from Chicago. This sounds quite a bit like his last band, THE BROADWAYS. Sort of CRIMPSHINEish emo laced pop punk with lots of hooks and really strong vocals. I'd check it out if I were you, but goddamnit Asian Man, send the whole package next time. (JER)

(ASIAN MAN/PO Box 35585/MONTE SERENO, CA 95030)



LEGION

7"

These guys have a bone to pick with Jesus. The cover art is a drawing of Jesus impaled through the ass and mouth on the cross. His dick is even nailed

to it! I guess this would fall under the black metal category, but it doesn't sound very metal to me; it sounds more hardcore. The lyrics are, of course, about anti-Christianity. (AD)

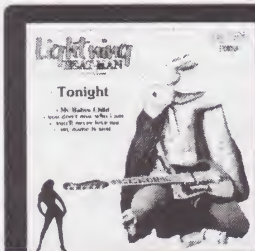
(UGLY POP VINYL/2 BLOOR ST., SUITE 100, BOX 477/TORONTO, ONTARIO M4W 3E2/CANADA)



LIGHTNING BEATMAN

"Tonight" 7"

Everyone knows LIGHTNING BEATMAN, the Euro-Masked Wrestler. He's been doing his one-man-band schtick for years now - I guess he doesn't have to worry about fighting with other band members! Anyway, the B-Man is always fun to listen to, even though this one sounds exactly like all his other records, but who gives a fuck? Just buy it; you'll like it.



(KEN ROCK/SKAGGETORP CENTRUM 12/586 44 LINKÖPING, SWEDEN)

LOAD LEVELERS

"A Half Step Flat" 7" EP

Shit-kicking punk from some pickers that can really play their hearts out. Good tunes, fun lyrics, plus a messed up Christmas song. (JC)

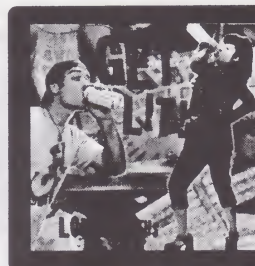


(AIN'T THAT A RAT'S ASS/PO BOX 25453/SEATTLE WA 98125)

LOUDMOUTHS

"Get Lit" CD

Rousing, rawkus beer swillin' punx that have been trashing local clubs for a few years now. Beth and company go right for the jugular with short, sharp tunes of mayhem and drunken revelry. Great band to check out live. (JC)



(702/PO BOX 204/RENO, NV 94117)

BOB LOG III

"Trike" CD

Key member of the wonderfully off-kilter band KDOO RAG. BOB LOG III is back with a full

length CD of madness. Musically falling somewhere between CAPTAIN BEEFHEART and NOMEANSNO. The crazed hillbilly demeanor of the charector he sings in makes it a bit hard to make out all of what he is singing (my advance has no lyric sheet) What I can make out is brilliant, with great song titles like "Clap Your Tits", "Borgnignin" and "Ass Computer". (JC)

(FAT POSSUM/PO BOX 1923/OXFORD, MS 38655)



LONELY KINGS

"What If?" CD

The LONELY KINGS tried to get us to put a record out for them last year, and we respectfully declined. WHOOPS! I might be kicking myself for that one for some time now. Very reminiscent of "Hoss" era LAG WAGON, with a hint of the emo (mainly in the bass playing) feel of HOT WATER MUSIC. This thing smokes. Great catchy song writing, executed with controlled aggression. Well done, sirs. (BAM)

(FEARLESS/13772 GOLDENWEST ST. #545/WESTMINSTER, CA 92683)



LONG BEACH DUB ALLSTARS

"Right Back" CD

Continuation of the enormously popular band SUB-LIME. Following the formula of deep, stoney, frat-boy reggae punctuated with thrashy outbursts from time to time. Nothing that holds my attention for long. I would rather listen to a band like the BAD BRAINS, SECRET HATE or the OFFS, all of which did this style better, keeping it in the context of the song rather than making a whole song (let alone a whole album) out of it. (JC)

(DREAMWORKS)



REVIEWS

LOWER CLASS BRATS

"Glam Bastard/Live for Today"

Side A is a certifiable new street punk hit. Sounds like they borrowed a bit from MOTT THE HOOPLE for the main riff, which judging from the lyrical content might have been intentional. Side B is equally catchy and cool (no it's not that "Live For Today"). Cool band to keep an eye out for. (JC)

(TKO/4104 24TH STREET #103/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)



LUCKIE STRIKE

"Geekcore" CD

Way strong female vocals unfortunately backed by a pretty standard & unimaginative band. This mostly stays in the pop punk arena, with a few, disastrous forays into the dreaded ska territory. I'm telling you, this girl can sing, but the band needs help. They seem pretty young, maybe their next release will be better. (JER)

(PORK N' BEANS/16161 NORDOFF ST. #249/NORTH HILLS, CA 91343)



MACGILLICUDDYS

"Stylin' & Profilin'/Cactus Jack" 7"

This band has a weird vibe, sort of a garage rock & roll with a slightly overproduced sound. The A-side was definitely the best, but never really went anywhere. The B-side was ruined by the wanky metal guitar through the whole thing. Not my thing. (BAM)

(SPLITSVILLE/PO BOX 750927/NEW ORLEANS, LA 70175)

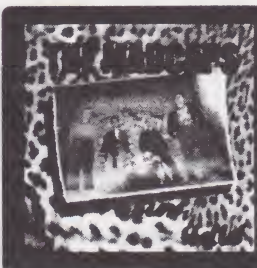


SHITLIST

MADCAPS

"Cheers, Hello" 7" EP

Knowing nothing about this band makes me hope that this is their first release. Pedestrian stuff. The songs have a cool style, but are played poorly and unimagnatively. (JC)



(DSS/PO Box 739/4021 LINZ AUSTRIA)

MALIGNUS YOUTH

"Vinyl" CD

I was so happy to see this in the review pile at *Hit List* HQ. Outside of Arizona, I doubt too many people have heard of this brilliant, obscure band, but living in Phoenix throughout the 80's and early 90's, I was lucky enough to have unexpectedly caught these guys opening for ALL. They're kind of indescribable in that they don't sound like any band I've ever heard. Just about every song has a lightning fast 1-2, 1-2 thrash beat with crazy, melodic guitar work, incredibly complex bass lines and harmonizing, almost operatic (they had two lead singers) vocals. That may sound weird, but the end result is one of the most original bands I've ever heard. This CD compiles all their vinyl releases from '90 to '92 which are practically impossible to find. It's all digitally remastered too, so it sounds a bit better than the old, recorded-in-a-bedroom records did (although it's still not a great mix.) One thing I don't particularly like (that I never picked up on before) is the Christian slant to some of the lyrics (there's a bible verse on the back, but they still say "fuck" in the songs), but it's not a huge deal. Pick this up if you're at all curious about a legendary band that you've probably never heard of. (JER)

(YOUTH INC./PO Box 65802/TUCSON, AZ 85728-5802)



MARCELLO AND THE MACHINE

"Chainsaw + Brokenheart/Satan's Girlfriend" 7"

Awesome bluesy, Alo-fi gem. Gruff vocals and dynamic guitar pickin'. Down and dirty tunes that sound like they were recorded in some south western dive bar, rather than in an Italian studio. (JC)

(BAD MAN/VIA ROMA 68/18040 CASTELLETTO, MONFERRATO (AL) ITALY)

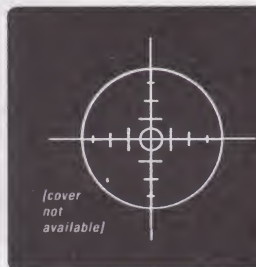


MARS MOLES

"Punk Religion; Back Into The Unknown" LP

The first side of this LP covers BAD RELIGION's legendary embarrassment, "Into The Unknown", and the record sleeve is a parody of it. Now, I've only heard about one half of one song from that album (the only person I know who owns a copy is the fanatic record collecting coordinator of this very magazine), but this stuff has got to be better than the originals. At least there's no keyboard here. The second side is original material, mostly in German, that is pretty tight melodic punk rock with male / female vocals. This album is worth picking up just for the beautiful, thick green & red splattered vinyl. Dumb name for a band though, maybe it sounds cooler in German. (JER)

(PLASTIC BOMB/GUSTAV-FREYTAG-STR. 18/47057 DUISBURG/GERMANY)



MC5

"'66 Breakout!" CD

Despite the energetic appeal of the "Kick Out the Jams" LP, MC5 fans are all in agreement that their three major label albums never adequately captured the raw power that characterized this notorious band in



their heyday. This CD helps to fill that lacuna, as it includes previously unreleased demos, live recordings, and studio recordings from their earliest days. Along with some disposable covers, herein you'll find raunchy, intense versions of "Looking at You", "Black to Comm", and my own two faves, "I Just Don't Know" and "I Can Only Give You Everything". (JB)

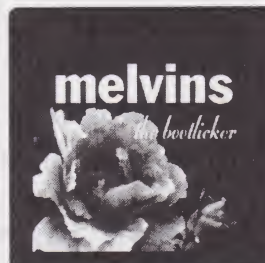
(BOMP/TOTAL ENERGY/PO Box 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)

MÉLVINS

"Bootlicker" CD

The second installment of the MELVINS trilogy on Mike Patton's (FAITH NO MORE, MR. BUNGLE) new label, Ipecac. This episode finds our heroes in a subdued and experimental mood. Steering clear of their usual bombastic heaviness and instead opting to play quieter music with smoother and more indie-pop orientated melodies. An overall cool sounding record, although not one of my favorites from the band - realizing of course that there is a concept going on here and this might be best listened to in the context of the entire project. (JC)

(IPECAC/PO Box 1197/ALAMEDA, CA 94501)

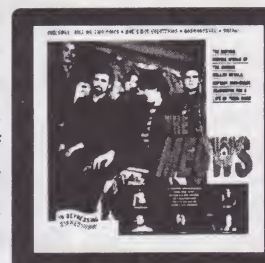


MEOWS

"The Boring World of" CD

Oh my god I love this band!! The Spaniards have been putting out really great stuff over the last year or so. Finally, great catchy rock n roll!! THE MEOWS have everything I look for in a great rock n roll band, great original songs with killer catchy hooks that are reminiscent of the PAUL COLLINS BEAT, THE VIKINGS and early 70's power pop ala THE SCRUFFS, and THE RASPBERRIES. It's got punch with super loud guitars I LOVE THIS BAND!! YEAH!! I HAVEN'T GIVEN UP ON ROCK 'N' ROLL!!(TL)

(NO TOMMOROW RECORDS/PO Box 1134, 12080/CASTELLON, SPAIN)



METROSCHIFTER

"Strawberries" CD

Pretentious indie rock. Lots of (not so) clever effects and hackneyed attempts at cool riffs and heaviness. There's an utterly moronic grunge cover of the old bluegrass standard "My Old Kentucky Home" that drives the final nail into the coffin. (JC)



(DOGHOUSE/Box 8946/TOLEDO, OH 43623)

MODEL AMERICAN

"We've Had Enough" CD

Anthematic hardcore for the kids to go nuts to. Lots of solid chunky music that tears itself down at times only to build back up into fast frenzied guitar riffing and extremely tight giddy-up drumming. Reminiscent of REDEMPTION 87 and a few other noteworthy Bay Area bands with numbers in their names. Total energy on this release. I bet they're inspiring live as well. (JC)



(SESSIONS/15 JANIS WAY/SCOTT VALLEY, AZ 95066)

MONKHOUSE

"Recognize Your Enemies" 2x7"

MONKHOUSE seem to vary their sound a little on this 8 song double 7", though they never stray too far from the LEATHERFACE sound, and that's all right with me. They even have Mr. Stubbs' vocals nailed. If this was sent to me as a demo tape, this band would have a contract in the mail on the way to them. (BAM)

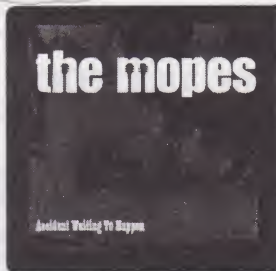


(REACTIONARY/PO Box 5466/ATLANTA, GA 30307)

MOPES

"Accident Waiting To Happen" CD

The MOPES fulfill their promise of being the next great pop-punk band that they hinted at on their debut EP. The songwriting has developed from jokey knock-off songs to finely polished pop gems. "My Heart Won't Bleed For You", "She Fell For Me", and especially "I Don't Know How To Say Goodbye" will have the ponytail girls with backpacks and QUEERS shirts swooning in the isles. They also keep some of their Western influenced instrumental stuff - a tasty way to round out the CD. (JC)



(LOOKOUT/PO Box 11374/BERKELEY, CA 94712)

MORONICS

"Girls Love The Moronics" 7"

Ken Rock adds another great chapter to his rock 'n' roll novel - this time with the MORONICS taking the lo-fi hi noise approach which works just fine for me. 4 songs very reminiscent of early Rip Off Records releases. Just send this guy \$100, and tell him to send you his whole catalog! (BAM)



(KEN ROCK/SKARRETORP CENTRUM 12/586 44 LINKÖPING SWEEDEN)

MORONIQUE

"Twelve" 7"

The singing and songwriting of this band reminds me a lot of the PARASITES, but with way more aggressive intros, outros, and bridges. Almost like adding a bit of Fat Wreck into the mix. All in all, a pretty strong release. (BAM)



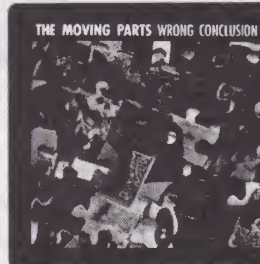
(TANK/PO Box 40009/NEW BEDFORD, MA 02744)

REVIEWS

MOVING PARTS

"Wrong Conclusion" CD

Predecessor to such legendary Boston-based bands such as MISION OF BURMA and BIRDSONGS OF THE MESOZOIC (yeah, that means that ROGER MILLER guy was in it). An interesting collection of never before released tracks recorded in 1978. Quirky and interesting, though only a sign of things to come. Not too impressive on its own. New wave experimentation that borders on prog-rock. Good to have in the collection for reference, but not for multiple play. (JC)



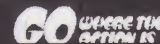
(ARF ARF/PO Box 465/MIDDLEBOROUGH, MA 02346)

MULLENS

"Go where the Action is" -CD

Fans of American 60's garage will probably dig this. I have heard a lot of talk about this band. I hear people comparing them to DMZ, THE STOOGES, and the HEARTBREAKERS. I don't think so buddy boy! They don't seem wild enough on this here CD to compare them to any of those rock 'n' roll legends. They remind me of a watered down SWINGING NECKBREAKERS, although they do have some catchy guitar hooks on songs like "Future Days" and "Miserable Party" - hey, they even rip off CHEAP TRICK on "Egg it On". I'm curious to see them live. I'm not giving up yet... (TL)

THE MULLENS



(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSURG, PA 15317)

MURDER SUICIDE PACT

"Bite the Hand" LP

From the beginning I was taken back to that good old punk sound, long forgotten about.

SHITLIST

And...then the singer got on it. This where I got lost on this one. For me, I need something different from song to song. The same tired, rubble, rubble, vocals get old quick! Otherwise this is a great record actually. (JM)

(BURRITO RECORDS/P. O. BOX 3204/BRANDON, FL. 33509-3204)

MYSTREATED

"There's No Escape" EP

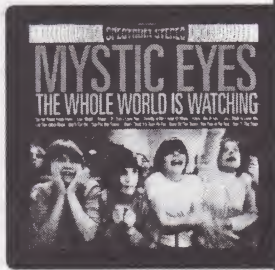
Due to the pretentious record sleeve, I wanted to not like this - but right away elements of the SMALL FACES, STOOGES, ANIMALS and STANDELLS. I was expecting regurgitation but got innovation. (BB)

(SYMPATHY FOR THE RECORD INDUSTRY)

NAMELOSERS

"Fabulous Sounds from Southern Sweden" CD

An uneven collection of material by Swedish beat group the NAMELOSERS. Their earlier material (recorded as the BEACHERS) consists of pretty derivative and uninspired covers of classic R&B songs (such as "New Orleans" and "Around and Around"), but after seeing the WHO in England at the end of 1964 they transmogrified into a heavy Modbeat band with slashing guitars, feedback, and manic Keith Moon-style drumming. This is best exemplified on the spectacular "Do-Ao", "That's Alright", and their cover of "Land of 1000 Dances" - all of which can also be found on the great "Searchin' for Shakes" comp - but another big winner here is the tough-sounding but less



fuzzed-out "But I'm So Blue". (JB)

(GOT TO HURRY/NO ADDRESS)

N.C. THIRTEENS

"You Us And Them" CD

Pretty mixed up ska stuff that tries too hard to incorporate too many elements into the mix and ends up sounding confused. I was gonna give this a so-so review, but on the last track, they fucked up and tried to cover THE CLASH. Bad move. Plus, I just really hate ska. (JER)

(KADO/14000 MILITARY TRAIL STE. 208-A/DEL RAY BEACH, FL 33484)

NECKBONES

"The Lights Are Getting Dim" CD

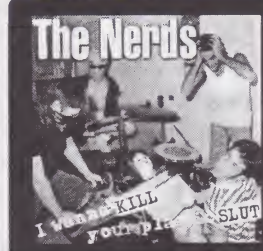
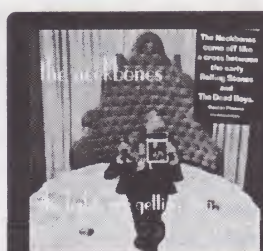
Bluesy rock 'n' roll in a JON SPENCER meets NEW YORK DOLLS vein. The second track "Cardiac Suture" sounds like a slowed down version of LOVE's "7 + 7 is". Lots of good rockin' going on. Big list of special guests even features one of the OBLIVIANS, which seems to be a nice match. (JC)

(FAT POSSUM/PO BOX 1923/DOxford, MS 38655)

NERDS

"I Wanna Kill Your Plastic Slut" 7"

I really don't know what's going on with this band. The cover has a picture of them fucking a blow up doll while chain-sawing its head off, and the singer seems to perform in nothing but tighty-whities with a dildo sticking out from the waistband and a bag on his head. The music is your basic anti-everything punk rock with titles like "Kill", "Go Fuck



Yourself" and "Slut." The also cover GG ALLIN'S "I Wanna Rape You." I don't have an opinion on this band. (JER)

(SCAREY RECORDS/VIA GALLIERA 32/1/10025 PINO T. SE (TO)/ITALY)

NEW AMERICAN MOB

"All Mob Cons" CDEP

Competent street punk from the LA area. I'm assuming that these guys have been in other bands, because they're not young, and they sound like pros. Kinda have a U.S. BOMBS sound going on. I'd pick it up if I found it cheap. This is the same label that put out some of the early TOILET BOYS material, so maybe they know something we don't. (JER)

(RAFR/11054 VENTURA BLVD./STUDIO CITY, CA 91604)

NEW CITY ROCKS

"No Pain, No Gain" 7"

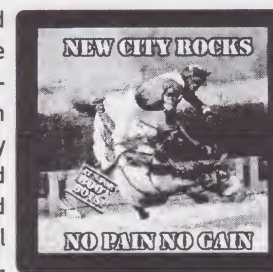
This - the second EP from these Italian street-punkers, has them bullying their way through 3 new mid tempo rockers - and then wrapping it all up with a great version of the CLASH's "Garageland". Ever notice how the best songs of all time sound good in any language? (BAM)

(BARRACUDA/c/o CANZI LUIGI C.P. 29-20050 SOVICO (MI) ITALY)

NEW LOWS

"Self Titled" -CD

Bay Area's own NEW LOWS play dirty, raw rock 'n' roll in an AC/DC-meets-the GORIES sorta way - sort of. The vocals are a bit so-so - a bit of the GLEN DANZIG thing going. All in all this CD is okay, but they're better



live. Go see them at the Portlight and say hello to Emmitt! (TL)

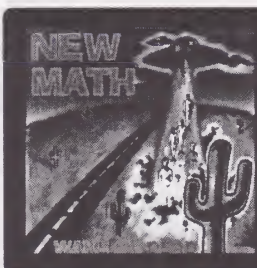
(THE NEW LOWS/509 DUBOCE ST./S.F., CA 94117)

NEW MATH

"Wake The Dead"

Semi-obscure late 70's early 80's band from upstate New York. Fun stuff, reminds me of GARY NUMAN mixed with DEVO. Not as driving or memorable as either of those outfits. More often than not, the overboard theatrics and keyboard work make this sound like 80's sci-fi b-movie soundtrack music. (JC)

(REANIMATOR/PO Box 1582/ANN ARBOR, MI 48106)



NEW WAVE HOOKERS

"Not Even A Virgin/Thunderbird" 7"

More trashy goodness. It's on Junk so you know it totally rocks. It's the NEW WAVE HOOKERS so you know it's totally sleazy. B-side features a bluesy ZZ TOP cover. (JC)

(JUNK/PO Box 1474/CYPRESS, CA 90630)



9 WOOD/RUBE WADDELL

"Bukka's Bullshit" 7" EP

The 9 WOOD side is from 1989 and it sounds like it. Kooky funk/thrash that is pretty much worthless. The RUBE WADDELL side is from 1999 and is kooky country/polka music that is a little bit more soulful, but still of a highly questionable value. leaving me with no desire for a second listen. Nice thick vinyl and cool cover though. (JC)

(RITCIE/FLIGHT 13/NORDSTR. 2/D-79104/FREILBERG, GERMANY)



NO INNOCENT VICTIM

"Flesh and Blood"

Get ready to do that dance where you look as if your picking strawberries! This is fast, abrasive, hardcore that hold back nothing on the delivery. Victory has set the standard on this genre, and the quality department was on full alert when producing this disc. Well recorded with smart lyrics, a must for any hardcore fan - or people who like to get fucking outta their minds at a show. (JM)

(VICTORY/P.O. Box 146546/CHICAGO, IL. 60614)



NO-MEN

"Non - Sapiens Non sense" CD

Man, this was a tough one to review. Why, because I hate to write a bad review when I can't even beat a tambourine in time! But this isn't even close to being good. Sloppy, loud, crass, and unimaginative. To me, if I'm gonna spend my hard earned money, I at least want something good. If your gonna spend your hard earned money on recording a record, make it as good as possible - if only so some asshole like me won't bash it apart. (JM)

(TOCADO RECORDS/P.O. Box 3092/3003 AB ROTTENDAM/HOLLAND)



NO USE FOR A NAME

"More Betterness!" CD

What's going on here? Who took away the guitars? When you've got a guitar duo like Tony Sly and Chris Shiflett, the LAST thing you want to do is bury them in the mix so it sounds like the latest outing from BLINK-182. I mean, they still sound like NO



REVIEWS

USE, don't get me wrong, but for me, the most appealing thing about this band was the fucking monstrous guitar sound they've usually got going on. None of their records have really matched their live prowess, and unfortunately, this one moves farther away from capturing it. That said, the second half of the album, though so sadly emasculated, still manages to rock okay, and the Pogues' cover, a duet between Tony and TILT's Cinder Block is definitely an enjoyable highlight, though it doesn't match the sheer drunken rowdiness of DILLINGER FOUR's version of "Sally MacLennane". Now that Shiflett has moved on to FOO FIGHTER-dom, I'm curious to see where they go next. While not terrible, "More Betterness!" is definitely my least favorite of their four Wreck Chords on Fat.

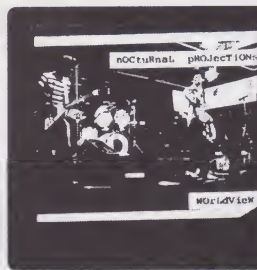
(FAT/PO Box 193690/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94119-3690)

NOCTURNAL PROJECTIONS

"Worldview" 7"

Four excerpts from the bands first demo from 1981. Cool catchy punk with great melodic leads and trashed out rock & roll solo's. Limited to 500 copies, this will be making 499 other people quite happy. (BAM)

(RAW POWER/PO Box 7127 WELLESLEY ST./AUCKLAND NEW ZELAND)

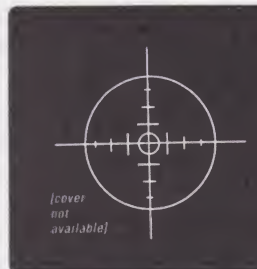


NUNS

"Hustler Blue" 7" EP

Classic punk band from the 80's back with solid new material on the a-side and two older tracks done live on the flip. "Hustler Blue" is a driving, thrashy song that critiques women who get ahead in life cashing in on their looks. (JC)

(EMPTY/SPITZWIESENSTR 50/90765/FURTH, GERMANY)



SHITLIST

OPPRESSED LOGIC

"It's Harassment" CD

The band that would not go away. After of being the punkest most obnoxious band in town, getting banned from every magazine, radio station, club and bar for miles around. What do they do? They actually release their best, most accessible material to date. Songs that are played instead of just thrashed and some downright rockin' tunes. Some of Mike's lyrical content is still questionable and I'm sure it will still ruffle a few feathers, but the overall record is solid and it shows a band that definately (dare I say) matured and has a place in the punk scene. (JC)



(INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH/2824 REGATTA BLVD./RICHMOND, CA 94804)

OPTIC NERVE

"Lotta Nerve" CD

Big lavish BEATLES and BYRDS harmonies. Jangly guitars and sweet-voices, not really turning the fuzz on until the last track, but that's OK. Cool record from this '60s revivalist band based in New York in the mid '80s. This CD contains material from their only 45s as well as a slew of great previously unreleased tracks. A band worth checking out. I loved the flyer art in the booklet. Features a couple of FUZZTONES in its history. (JC)



(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBURG, PA 15317)

OXBOARD DRAIN

"For Hours on End" CD

Furious, testosterone-driven Monster Truck hard-core/metal crossover stuff that I'd never have taken a liking to except for the fact that these guys understand rock 'n' roll and what live entertainment is all about. This

is almost unheard of in their genre, particularly in this age of apparent date rape fratboy "wiggers" like LIMP BIZKIT's Fred Durst, who should be killed immediately. (DJM)

(PAINTED BIRD PIERCING STUDIOS/4179 HAMILTON AVENUE/CINCINNATI, OH 45223)

PENETRATION

"The Early Years" LP

An original '77 English punk band. I personally never knew enough about PENETRATION, so I'm going into this a little ignorant. Girl singing punk rock, these are the demo recordings with some classics I already knew like "Don't Dictate" - this song is so fucking great, it's worth the price of this LP all by itself. "Firing Squad" is another awesome song. I only wish I paid more attention to this band earlier but thanks to Get Back, PENETRATION's got a new life. Get it.

(GET BACK/PIAZZA MALTONI 16 50065 PONTASSIEVE/FIRENZE ITALY)

TEX PERKINS

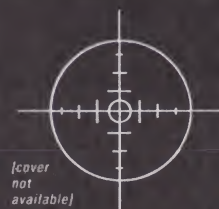
"Far Be It For Me" CD

The debut solo disc by KING OF KINGS' Tex Perkins, the suave singer for Australia's CRUEL SEA, as well as on "My All-Time Heroes" by the impossibly great BEASTS OF BOURBON. It's full of haunting songs that speak to the hard times many of you still have to look forward to when the party ends, the drugs stop workin', the band breaks up, the meal ticket girlfriend abandons you, you never become a rock star, and you don't even die young. Rehabs, relapses, and alienation ensues, along with sadness, marginalization, and adulthood. Beautiful, yearning, tender, authentic stuff. (DJM)

(POLYDOR-AUSTRALIA)



[cover not available]



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[cover not available]

PETTY FORDS/SCREWBALLS split 7"

I'll admit it, I'm a fucking pig. I grabbed this 7" for review only because of the babe on the cover, and the beautiful girl on the label on the back, but this actually turned out to be pretty damn good. The SCREWBALLS bring two great juvenile pop punk songs, while the PETTY FORDS bring more of a snotty faster pop punk edge. Both sides are good, but the chick on the cover takes the cake. (BAM)

(608 KISSES/PO Box 3127/LA CROSSE, WI 54602)



PHENOBARBIDOLS

"Fish Lounge" CD

Don't like the music, don't like the vocals and especially don't like the mess they made out of the PATTI SMITH song. It's just silly when you cover what you are obviously trying to rip off. (BB)

(SYMPATHY FOR THE RECORD INDUSTRY)



AL PERRY/JAMES DEAD

Split 7" EP

One artist and one band. Neither of which I had heard of before or that I want to ever hear from again. AL PERRY is boring indie-rock. JAMES DEAD is marginally more rockin', but nothing to really sink your teeth into. (JC)

(DRY RIVER/Bed/5425 EAST BROADWAY BLVD. #192/TUSCON, AZ 85701)



PIEBALD

"If It Weren't For Venetian Blinds, It'd Be Curtains For Us All" CD

Besides being the current leader in the Album Title of the Year sweepstakes, PIEBALD turn in a noisy, poppy, sometimes aggressive/sometimes quiet record that manages to be continually listenable in spite of all the humorous twists in the music and lyrics. JAW-BREAKER gets namechecked once and lyrically referenced twice, so you know these guys at least have taste, tho' the TEN YARD FIGHT reference makes me question it a bit. On the musical side, imagine if the PROMISE RING listened to LIFETIME instead of THE CARS and you begin to get the idea. Not only that, but the track "Grace Kelly With Wings" reminds me of this one skirt my girlfriend has. One of my favorites this issue. (DG)

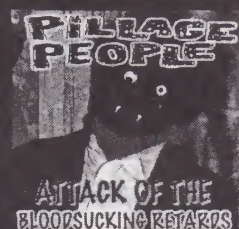


(BIG WHEEL RECREATION/325 HUNTINGTON AVE. NO. 24/BOSTON, MA 02115)

PILLAGE PEOPLE

"Attack of the Killer Retards" CD

Well, I'll start off by saying this, my opinion doesn't amount to a hill of shit. So, PILLAGE PEOPLE and Oink, don't freak out or anything. But this didn't do it for me. The movie sound bites got to redundant after a while, and the music was to fast for its own good, in my book. But hell, I can't play guitar, drums, or bass, so I'll just fuck off from here. (JM)



(OINK RECORDS/P.O. Box 27813/WASHINGTON DC. 20038-7813)

PIMPS

"Wicca Chicka" 7" EP

Snooty garage-style punk with satirical lyrics, as in the title song: "Voodoo chick bewitch me...Wicca Chicka, cast your spell...Your religion



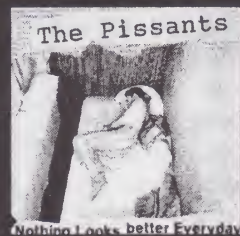
sucks, I just wanted to fuck..." Yeah, that's right, the PIMPS play groovy, juvie p-rock with dirty guitars and themes like "Nose Pain". What's not to like? (JB)

(RAPID PULSE/PO Box 5075/MILFORD, CT 06460)

PISSANTS

"Nothing Looks Better Everyday" CD

Right from the start this grabbed me. Not even my cup of tea, but I liked the guitar work, and at times it reminded me of old "Nardcore". You know, STALAG 13, ILL REPUTE, and AGGRESSION. Oddly enough, I hear a bit of pop-punk in there too. Fast, energetic, original, and kept my attention all the way through, which is a feat in itself, cause I'm a jaded old fart. (JM)

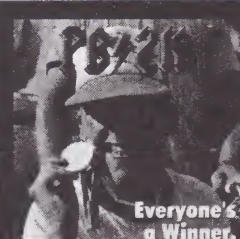


(SOUR RECORDS/709 RIDGE BLVD./CONNELLVILLE, PA. 15425)

PITBOSS 2000

"Everyone's A Winner" CD

This CD is fucked up and pretty entertaining, if you get the joke. Over the top hardcore/hatecore that borders on speed metal. Every song is a joke; they take on all kinds of tasteless topics. Most are on the money, some are just expectedly retarded. Mix the MEATMEN, CRUCIAL YOUTH and SEPULTURA. (JC)



(USE YOUR HEAD/PO Box 297977/COLUMBUS, OH 43229)

POBLERS UNITED

"Full Contact" 7" EP

POBLERS UNITED are a Swedish band who play punchy, rude Oi. Their lyrical themes are the usual ones, as songs like



[cover not available]

REVIEWS

"Steelclad Boots" and "Spirit of Oi" suggest, but it should be noted that these lads are anti-fascist louts rather than fascist louts. The music itself has that all-important aggressive quality and a nice raw sound, though "Antifascist Skin" has a reggaeified beat. (JB)

(KNOCK OUT/POSTFACH 10 07 16/46527 DINSLAKEN/GERMANY)

POISON IVY

"Crawlin Slimy Things" 7"

This sounds like the fallout of once great UK bands such as EXPLOITED or BROKEN BONES. Fast attacking punk rock with "on the edge of metal" sounding guitar work. 4 pretty good songs here on this one sided 7". (BAM)



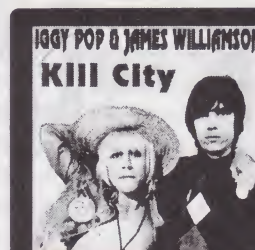
(EMPTY/ERLANGERSTR 7/90765 FURTH GERMANY)

IGGY POP/JAMES WILLIAMSON

"Kill City" - Cd

Bomp records has re-released this LP from 1977 on a CD which includes a 12-page booklet with extensive liner notes by Tim Stegall. A must for Iggy collector geeks. There is just no one today who is as killer, powerful and wild as Iggy Pop. This is the first post-STOOGES recording that Iggy did following "Metallic Ko". At the height of the punk boom in 1977, Bomp took the offer from James Williamson to release "Kill City". It was the first LP to come out on the label, as well a perfect start for the Bomp Records empire. I haven't listened to this LP in a long time; I forgot how great the songs "Kill City" and "Night Theme" are. Go get it!!(TL)

(BOMP/PO Box 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)



SHITLIST

POP RIVETS

"Fun In The U.K." CD

If you have never heard the legendary BILLY CHILDISH's original punk band POP RIVETS, then you need to rush right out and get this CD now - you're missing out! Excellent stuff in the '77 punk/mod fashion. Self-described as "Young, drunk, bored with nothing better to do".. You would be hard pressed for anything better to do, as these songs are brimming with great hooks and lyrics that show a keen sense of humor. "Lambrettavespascoota" is one of the catchiest songs Mr. Childish has ever been associated with, which definitely says something! (JC)

(GET HIP/PO BOX 666/CANONSBERG, PA 15317)



POTTYSHOTS

"No Longer Building"-7"

Instrumental band from Milwaukee. This is not bad, just sorta generic. Even the inside of the record is full of other bad reviews these guys thought were a joke. Sorry to dissappoint, but you should listen to reviewers, we are not perfect, but we try - except for in my case. I am perfect, and the POTTYSHOTS are not - just mediocre, nothing more nothing less.

(BEESHU/1421 NORTH 69TH ST./MILWAUKEE, WI 53213)



POWDER MONKEYS

Talk Sowlty And Carry A Big Shtick" CD EP

Odd little EP from these Spanish rockers. Starts off with a LITTLE RICHARD cover, then they rip into 5 originals. Cool gruff vocals over crunchy



guitars that noodle just a bit too much. Main downfall on this is the songwriting, which is a bit bland - but they show promise. (JC)

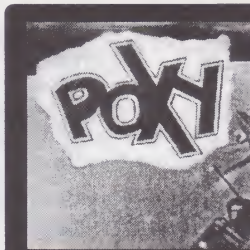
(PUNCH/APDO CORREOS 60167/MADRID, SPAIN)

POXY

"The Very End" EP

ADD Records seems to be cornering the market on this sound and look. Another leather, acne, studs, and bristles band. A little more melodic at times than say label mates, Global Threat. Whatever the look, these guys hail from Seattle, and seem to hold on to that angry, pissed and young sound reminiscent of CRASS, DISCHARGE, and GBH,... back in the day that is! (JM)

(ADD RECORDS/270 CENTRAL STREET/HINGHAM, MA. 02043)

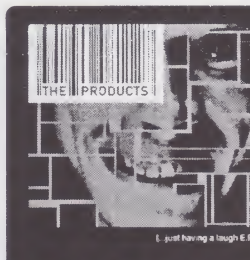


PRODUCTS

"Just Having A Laugh" 7"

Very in-your-face Voi that breaks into catchy street-punk choruses, a la SHAM 69. 4 of the 5 songs were exceptional, which makes this a keeper for me. (BAM)

(DSS/#606-233 ABBOTT ST./VANCOUVER, BC V6B 2K7 CANADA)



PROMISE RING

"Very Emergency" CD

Reluctant standard-bearers of the "Emo Nation", the PROMISE RING play nothing more than well-crafted pop-rock songs with an eighties bent. More RIT OCASEK than RITES OF SPRING, "Very Emergency" doesn't quite live up to the quirky beauty of 1997's watershed "Nothing Feels



Good", but nevertheless delivers the goods - if these are the goods you're into having delivered. Just remember, OCASEK wasn't just in the CARS - he produced the BAD BRAINS too. Think of it that way, and this band totally begins to make sense - even if the lyrics can be a bit too willfully obscure for their own good. If you're already a fan, definitely pick this one up - if not, check it out with the warning that on the inside, there are people dressed as furry, cuddly animals. (DGJ)

(JADE TREE/2130 KENNYWAY ROAD/WILMINGTON, DE 19810)

PUBLIC SAFETY

"Try This at Home" CD

RANDUMBS, don't go selling the farm yet, but we've got some competition here. Lets just say we've found another band with a sense of humor, and some licks to back it. "Grease Burger", "Mano Y Mano", and "Brand New Hardcore", are the stand out tracks in this man's book. I'm sure when they hit your town, they'll be drunk and looking to fondle sheep. Try this now. (JM)

(NO ADDRESS)

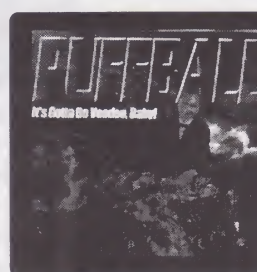


PUFFBALL

"It's Gotta Be Voodoo Baby" CD

Lord Lemmy L b e g a t MOTÖRHEAD and it was good. MOTÖRHEAD begat many other fine rock ensembles, a whole slew of them oddly enough from Sweden and other Scandinavian countries. Must be something in their Viking heritage. Fine slab of power chording in the Lord Lemmy's image. (JC)

(BURNING HEART/PO BOX 441/701 48 OREBRO, SWEDEN)



PURPLE ANALOGUE

"Kill The Machine" CD

This CD rocks. Sounds like a tough STEREO LAB - and the sax element reminds me of TUXEDO

MOON. The whole album is pretty diverse and structured well. I also detect SILVER APPLES influences, but it remains innovative. (BB)



(INTERZONE RECORDS/WWW.INTERZONE.COM)

PUT-DOWNS

"National Band Of Texas" 7"

Snotty, sloppy punk rock 'n' roll from the Lone Star State. Reminds me of an all male version of the LOUDMOUTHS. Four songs, no slouchers. Pick it up. (JER)

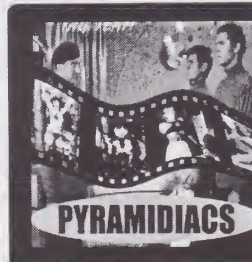


(TURKEY BASTER/PO BOX 22259/DALLAS, TX 75222)

PYRAMIDIACS

"Tag team" 7" EP

Australian power Pop with crispy, clean production and vocal harmonies. Pretty good, I think! Reminiscent of early 80's Bomp Records sound ala the PLIMSOUls, 20/20, early ROMANTICS, THE SHOES, THE LAST, with a little PAUL COLLINS BEAT thrown in for punch. "Open Every Window" is way - and my fav on this slab-o-wax(TL)

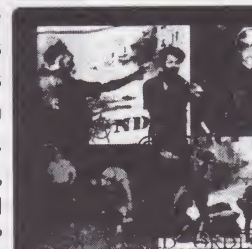


(HELLFIRE CLUB, PO BOX 81, 84100 ORANGE, FRANCE)

RANDOM CONFLICT

"New World Order" CD

Where have these guys been hiding? This kicks ass from beginning to end. "Tell Me Why", "Don't Know" and "Law and Order"



start this off. I'd love to see them with THE BEL-TONES together on a bill. You need a description? Okay, not super fast, well held together, unique guitar work, melodic vocals, with different approaches to writing rarely seen today. These guys could be something great on their next studio attempt. If they come to your town, call me so I can see them!

(RANDOM CONFLICT/PO. BOX 12262/HUNTSVILLE, AL. 35815-2262)

RANDUMBS

"In Search Of The Abominable Sonoman" CD

What's up with all the Sonoma pride? I've been there and it aint all that! Anyhow, this sits musically in between early GG ALLIN, and the punker DROPKICK MURPHYS stuff. Very in your face, and with songs this catchy, you wont mind. Kinda punk, kinda rock, kinda Oi, pretty fucking great! (BAM)

(TKO/4104 24TH ST. #103/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)



RC5

"Comin' My Way" 7"

Much like their namesakes farther down the alphabet, RC5 play loud, fuzzed out rock n' roll that is consistent with what this label puts out. If you're like me, then you pick up everything that Junk puts out whether you've heard of 'em or not. (JER)

(JUNK/PO BOX 1474 CYPRESS, CA 90630)



RC5

"You're Gonna Pay" 7" EP

Featuring former ZIPGUN singer Robb Clarke, these guys have been wowing audiences in Seattle for a while now with their amped-up MC5/STOOGES/RADIO BIRDMAN-influenced sound. They have quite the knack for penning

REVIEWS

catchy songs, which translate well in the studio due to Jack Endino's punchy yet live-sounding production. The EP contains four songs, my faves being "In My Heart" and "Get My Way". (AW)

(SMALLTOWN/205 SUMMIT AVENUE E. #306/SEATTLE, WA 98102)



REAL KIDS

"Better Be Good" CD

This new Norton release consists of the first REAL KIDS single, outtakes from their first album on Red Star, and demos from their sessions for Bomp, so it's bound to be of great interest to rabid fans of the band. Perhaps most surprising is that some of the outtakes and demos sound better than the finished products on their "official" releases, in the sense that they're rawer, punkier, and less poppy-sounding. I'm not saying that you should pick this up with the aim of replacing your "All Kindsa Girls" LP, just that your appreciation of the band may be further heightened after listening to these particular versions. (JB)

(NORTON/BOX 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)



REAL KIDS

"No Place Fast" CD

Norton has once again performed a valuable service for us rock 'n' rollers by reissuing the second REAL KIDS LP and the TAXI BOYS 12" EP on the same disc. Although both are from the early 80s and haven't yet been as widely appreciated as the REAL KIDS great debut LP, they both contain several strong songs. If you have any doubts about



SHITLIST

this claim, I invite you to check out "No Place Fast", "Senseless", "Every Day is a Saturday", "What She Don't Know", and "Everybody's Girl". (JB)

(NORTON/Box 646, COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)

REALITY

"Young Drunk Punks" CD

A collection of two rare singles and a bunch of compilation tracks. REALITY were a notorious bunch of drunken teenagers playing classic sounding English punk in the early 80's. Renowned for trashing the place and playing with punk luminaries like CHELSEA, UK SUBS and the SUBHUMANS, they never really broke away from that status - dissolving before any of the members were much more than 19 years old. Nice to see it all compiled here, as they were a band that showed much promise. (JC)

(OVERGROUND/PO Box 1NW/NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE/NE99 1NW, UK)

REDUCERS S.F.

"Backing The Longshot" CD

Hot new Bay Area streetpunk band. Remind me of some of the poppier SWINGIN' UTTERS songs mixed with a DROPKICK MURPHYS kind of energy. Full of clever guitar hooks and catchy sing along choruses. A great live band, well worth checking out. (JC)

(TKO/4104 24TH STREET #103/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94114)

RETARDS

"You're So Lewd" 7"

GG would have loved this record! 3 snotty as hell mid tempo catchy '77 style punk rock

songs. This is awesome. Give me a full length!!! (BAM)

(EMPTY/PO Box 12034/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

RICHMOND SLUTS

"Rock & Roll Fantasy" 7"

Shae Rocker, ex drummer for the FORGOTTEN, decides to move to the front of the stage and try his hand at playing guitar and singing. The result is a very cool mid tempo trashy '77 NEW YORK DOLLS/DEAD BOYS feeling record, with vocals reminiscent of what drunken Stiv sounded like live. All in all, a real fun record. Separating the guitar and bass into different speakers also adds a nice trashy feel. Keeper. (BAM)

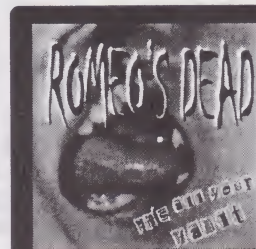
(WICKSWORLD/PO Box 420B34/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94142)

ROMEO'S DEAD

"It's All Your Fault" CD

The debut long-player from an undeniably rockin' and tuneful band. ROMEO'S DEAD effortlessly crank out trashed-out yet melodic punk 'n' roll numbers with cool-sounding lead vocals. Overall they have kind of a glam punk feel, which is fine by me, and "I Don't Wanna Hear Any Love Songs Today", "My Solution", and "Nothin's Gonna Kill You" are terrific songs. But there are also a couple of slightly generic tracks, and the production may be a bit too clean. (JB)

(INDEPENDENT SHOWGIRL/SUITE 481/PO Box 410990/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94141)



ROMEO'S DEAD

"So Far" 7"

Even before I heard these guys, I had always noticed the SF "scenesters" walking around with ROMEO'S DEAD written on the back of their jackets, or wearing the band's shirts or buttons. This sparked my interest. This 7" would answer anyone's curiosity. I think these are the 2 best songs that I've heard ROMEO'S DEAD record. 2 midtempo rockers that'll have you tappin' your toe and singin' along. Hunt this down. (BAM)

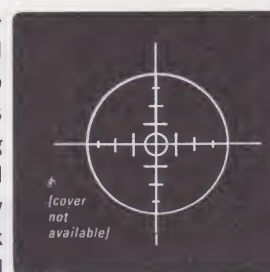
(SELF RELEASED-WWW.LOSERLOVESONGS.COM)



ROMEO'S DEAD / BURDENS split 7"

Thank God people aren't afraid to throw hooks into their r&r. A guy gets tired of hearing straight forward rock that's usually trying to break some land speed record. ROMEO'S DEAD come through with 2 great catchy songs, while BURDENS have more of a midtempo streetpunk approach on their two songs. All in all, a great listen. (BAM)

(PELADO/521 W. WILSON #C-103/COSTA MESA, CA 92627)



ROYAL TRUX

"Veterans Of Disorder" CD

The first song on this is straight-up rock. The rest falls somewhere between the BEATLES "White Album" and most latter-day FLAMING LIPS. The songs are catchy and memorable, although sometimes bordering on the artsy-fartsy. A band that's been around for a while with a definite niche carved out for themselves. A little less guitar noodling would help them out a lot. As is, the album tends to degener-



ate as it goes on. (JC)

(DRAG CITY/BOX 476876/CHICAGO IL 60647)

RUPTURE

"Corrupture" CD

Australia's RUP-
TURE is proba-
bly one of the most
un-politically cor-
rect bands around,
with lyrics like
"retard tree-fucking
tree-spiking retard
buttfuck[s]" and
"jesus christ porno star, you're just an arseraping
cocksucking shitlicking buttraping nunraping
childraping shitbag arseraper" and "the human
race can fuck me up the arse." I don't know if
they're trying to be shocking or if they're actually
serious, but it's pretty funny. Musically they play
power-violence influenced hardcore that some-
times slows down for more traditional punk
sounding parts. (AD)

(YEAH, MATE! RECORDS/P.O. BOX 17/VICTORIA PARK, W.A./AUSTRALIA 6979)

RUSTY NAILS

"No Miracle in Ruins" CD

If the DROPKICK
MURPHYS are the
most prominent
group currently
seeking to incorpo-
rate bagpipes and
an Irish(-American)
vibe into singalong
punk and Oi, the
RUSTY NAILS may soon become their Scottish(-
American) counterparts. Being mainly of Scottish
descent myself, I must confess that the sound of
bagpipes invariably makes my heart go pitter-
patter and my eyes tear up, so I can't help but
really like this CD. At times the song structures
become a bit too complex for their own good, but
when they keep it basic or traditional - whether
punk- or Celtic-tinged - their music has a glori-
ously powerful and rousing anthemic sound. (JB)

(COOLIDGE/157 COOLIDGE TERRACE/WYCKOFF, NJ 07481)

SAFETY PINS

"Just in Fun/Backstreet Sally" 7"

The SAFETY PINS
are one of the
very best of the new
generation of
Spanish "old
school" punk
bands, and this 45
reveals why. Both
songs are way loud,
powerful, and hook-laden punkers of the sort
that'll get your head shakin' and your body
jumpin' straight up and down. Rockin' to the max,
as they say in Bilbao. (JB)

(NO TOMORROW/APDO. 1134/12089 CASTELLON/SPAIN)

SALEM LIGHTS

"Ivory" CD

Promising, clas-
sic trash debut
with one leopard-
skin creeper in the
glitter rock under-
belly and the other
on the sunnier,
more cerebral
power-pop side of
the street. Four mid-tempo songs that rock. The
first cheap comparisons that came to mind were
the PLIMSOULS and the REPLACEMENTS, but
these cats are workin' on their own thing. (DJM)

(FUNHOUSE/PO BOX 20708/DAKLAND, CA 94611)

SASKATCHEWAN TRIO

"Songs for a Cold World" CD

This was a pleas-
ant surprise. By
the looks of the CD,
I thought this was
going to be a folk
music coffee-house
type of thing, but
that's probably the
last thing it is.
Despite the poor quality recording, the band
shines through with some fast, pissed punk! The
singer screams through the whole 19-song CD.
(AD)

(RADICATOR RECORDS/31 EDGEComb RD./W. MILFORD, NJ 07480)

REVIEWS

SCARED OF CHAKA/THE REAL SWINGERS

split 7" EP

SCARED OF
CHAKA are a lot
cooler than I
thought they were. I
was expecting pop
punk but I got a
couple of great lo-fi
rockers. I'll have to
check out more of
their stuff. The REAL SWINGERS are a fine Italian
band that play much in the same vein. (JC)

(BALLROOM BLITZ/VIA CATULLO HH/80122 NAPOU ITALY)

SCARRED FOR LIFE

"Born Work Die" CD

Old school sound-
ing political
hardcore punk from
all places, Los
Angeles! These guys
sound like they've
been around the
block a few times.
Good release! (AD)

(KNOW RECORDS/P.O. BOX 90579/LONG BEACH, CA 90809)

SCOTT FARKUS AFFAIR

"Sorrows Learn to Swim" CD

Fuck yeah! Now
THIS is what I'm
talkin' about when I
use the "emo catch-
phrase" in the affir-
mative manner.
Noisy, intricate stuff
with impassioned
singing and solidly
heartfelt, honest lyrics. The sound is sort of a blend
of "Bivouac"-era JAWBREAKER and "In On the
Killtaker"-vintage FUGAZI, but these guys definitely
have their own thing going on. A great record to put
on after a really harsh, bitter breakup. (DG)

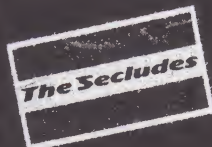
(OPULENCE/PO BOX 2071/WILMINGTON, NC 28402/AMBIGUOUS CITY/PO
BOX 31560/BALTIMORE, MD 21207)

SHITLIST

SECLUDES

"Life Goes On" CD

If the QUEERS had been born in the late 70's and spent their impressionable angst filled teen years listening to BAD RELIGION instead of the RAMONES, they might sound like this. Not bad. (JER)



Life Goes On

(CRAZY BASTARD/PMB-831/16420 SE MCGILLIVRAY, 103/VANCOUVER, WA 98683)

SECRET LOVERS

"Run" 7" EP

Rip roaring punk Rock. Great Austin Texas trio that I hope to hear more from. Think PLEASURE FUCKERS meet the HUMBERS. Something about trios that always seems to work., I can't think of any (in punk rock) offhand that I don't like. (JC)



[cover not available]

(MORTVILLE/PO Box 4263/AUSTIN TX 78765)

SEVEN FOOT SPLEEN

"Enter Therapy" CD

Man, the guys in this band look like Night of the Living Dead. SEVEN FOOT SPLEEN has a distinct sound that's slow - but not as slow as bands like NOOTHGRUSH. The singer sounds like he's on the urge of vomiting, but it goes with their music. I like this; it's original and driving without being jackhammer fast. (AD)

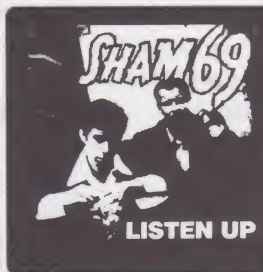


(TEE PEE/MIA RECORDS/315 CHURCH STREET-2ND FLOOR/NEW YORK, NY 10013)

SHAM 69

"Listen Up" 7"

New material from a band that's probably past their prime, but not over the hill just yet. The title track is a decent sing-a-long, of the same style that made them legendary. The B-side is pretty boring. Their new record might be worth looking into. (JER)



(SUDDEN DEATH/MOSCROP PO Box #43001/BURNABY, BC/CANADA V5G 3H0)

SHIVER

"The Time Is Now" CD

Humdrum skate-rock with a monotone lead singer. Singing trite lyrics about "Paying your dues" and "Defiantly standing together". The band sound unpracticed and unready to be recording a full length, and the production quality is murky at best. It's too easy to make a CD nowadays and bands should be more prepared when they do it. Putting out a record like this is way more damaging than waiting a year and doing it right. (JC)

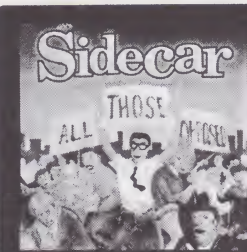


(SHIVER/8055 BROADLAWN DRIVE/PITTSBURG, PA 15237)

SIDECAR

"All Those Opposed" CD

High quality pop punk in the Fat / Fearless vein of things. Some of the riffs on songs like "Stop Me" (which incidentally is my favorite song here) sound familiar, but it's good nonetheless. Heck, originality is overrated if you ask me. They also do the obligatory hidden track which consists of them a) fucking around with some metal song and b) doing an awful karaoke version of the GO GOs' "Vacation." Pretty fun stuff. (JER)



(FASTMUSIC/368 BROADWAY #511/NY, NY 10013)

SILENCERS

"Cyclerific Sounds" CD

No, not that 80's band (that did the song Painted Moon) but a different one produced by Mick Collins. Great straight up timeless rock. (BB)



(TOTAL ENERGY RECORDS/POB 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)

SILVERKINGS

"King City" 7"

I am sensing a pattern with the Hit List powers that be.... They give me the low-fi shit; I, in turn, love it. To be honest, if this was 5 years ago, maybe this would be the case, but I've heard all this before. This band is probably a blast live though, with an amateurish, happy go lucky attitude; and this record seems like they're having fun. The songs are o.k., but the recording is weak. I understand the lo-fi thing, I did it, I had no money, used a cheap 4-track, recorded in the garage, but I'm tellin' ya, if you want to make a great record, go to a cheap studio that knows what they are doing!



(KEN ROCK/SKAGGETORP CENTRUM 12 58744/LINKOPING SWEDEN)

SINISTERS

"Cheerleader Drug Dealer" CD

The SINISTERS are the type of punk 'n' roll band that I'm partial to, given their aggressive mid- to uptempo sound, trashy guitars, snot-nosed vocals, and extreme distemper.

Their new CD EP contains six tracks worth of blistering, belligerent rawk with cynical, humorous themes. Some of the cuts lack a discernable hook or bridge, such as "Nerve Poison", but "Murder Style", "Tourniquet", and "Blast" totally rock out. (JB)



(KADO/K; b NESAK INT'L/14000 MILITARY TRAIL, SUITE 208A/DELRAY BEACH, FL 33484)

SISTER MARY ROTTEN CROTCH/TERMINUS CITY

"Skirts and Skins" split 7" EP

The SISTER MARY ROTTEN CROTCH side of this split EP is particularly appealing, given its bouncy punk sound, catchy choruses, female vocals, and angry yet funny lyrics (as in "Fuck You and Your Neighborhood"). But the TERMINUS CITY side is damn good, too, as it contains two heavy duty Oi anthems, the best of which is "Morris County". With a cover this juicy and music this entertaining, I'd advise you to grab this one before it's gone. (JB)

(HOOGLIGAN EMPIRE/PO Box 10024/KANSAS CITY, MO 64171)

SIX GOING ON SEVEN "Heartbreak's Got Backbeat" CD

Okay, so the Some Records website touts this record as "The 'Reign In Blood' of emo." SLAYER crossed with RITES OF SPRING? I'm SO fucking there, man! So imagine my disappointment when Brett hands me the record and the only thing it has in common with speedmetal's finest half-hour is the run time. Ever get the feeling you've been cheated? Basically, it's that really, really bad kind of emo, where there's no aggression (or even emotion) in the music, the lyrics are cleverly calculated, and everything's just kind of a beige melange of heartache that nobody really gives a shit about because, as Lance Hahn (a guy who knows a thing or six about writing a lyric) once sung, "It's BORING BORING BORING!" As the guy who likes the stuff that everyone else on the staff hates, I can pretty much guarantee that this record will not appeal to ANYONE who reads this magazine. What a waste of a great cover design. (DGI)

(Some/122 W. 29 St. 4th Floor/New York NY 10001)

SKIMMER "Tuftyclub" 7"

Another score for Crackle! Records. 4 more ABUZZCOCKS-style pop rockers by SKIMMER.

The production on this is amazing - seemingly trying to jump out of your speakers and destroy your house. I especially like the sentiment in "The Only Thing I Like About You Is Your Girlfriend". (BAM)

(CRACKLE!/PO Box 7/OTLEY LS21 1YB ENGLAND)

SKIT SYSTEM "Gra Varld.Svarta Tankar" CD

Another great Hardcore release from the country of Sweden! Swedish hardcore has long had a reputation for being some of the best and this crusty little CD is no exception. Fourteen songs of political angst along the lines of DETESTATION. (AD)

(DISTORTION RECORDS/P.O. Box 129/401 22 GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN)

SKRUIGNERS "La Cosa Che Non Ha Importanza" CD

Italy's SKRUIGNERS play fast sing-along punk that kind of reminds me of old 7 SECONDS. The music is melodic, but not in a poppy or cute way. There's definitely an 80's influence here. (AD)

(DISTRIBUTED BY ABRAXAS EXPORT/PIAZZA MALTONI 16/50065 PONTASSIEVE/FIRENZE, ITALY)

SKULL CONTROL "Deviate Beyond All Means Of Capture" CD/LP

SKULL CONTROL is saving my life right now. I was gonna commit suicide - but they might come out with more records. Anything Chris T. does is gold (CIRCUS LUPUS, MONORCHID). Do you like THE FALL? This is up there. Kim

REVIEWS

Thompson of CUPID CAR CLUB sings and plays bass. It's great to hear people continue to maintain a level of effort and skill. (BB)

(TOUCH AND GO/PO Box 25520/CHICAGO, IL 60625)

SLAPSHOT "Olde Tyne Hardcore" CD

So, Choke and the boys are back. They've given up on metal, and black trenchcoats, and have reverted to their, er, roots. Unfortunately, to these ears, said roots were always pretty gnarled and stubby. Hardly a rich source to mine for further hardcore classics. If you're a fan of early SLAPSHOT, or are looking for a compass to guide you back to the map, then this might just be for you. If monotone barking, cookie-cutter drumming, and generic riffing don't drive you wild, stick with your MINOR THREAT. (RK)

(TAANG!/706 PISMO COURT/SAN DIEGO, CA 92109)

SLIMER "Adult Cabaret" CD

At times, this sounds so much like BLINK-182 it's scary. I guess that's not much of a surprise, since this label is responsible for that band's early efforts. Strike while the iron's hot, that's what I always say. Considering BLINK-182's success, I'd say that if properly promoted, these guys could get pretty big. If you're into this kind of thing, you could do worse. (JER)

(CARGO/GRILLED CHEESE/4901-906 MORENA BLVD./SAN DIEGO, CA 92117-3432)

SHITLIST

SMALL BROWN BIKE

"Our Own Wars"

As Busta Rhymes is wont to say, "WOO HA!!" SMALL BROWN BIKE has you all in CHECK, baby. This is one of those records you listen to the first time and go, "Whoa...this smokes." Then after you listen to it four or five more times, you start to realize just HOW MUCH this record smokes. Imagine if JAW-BREAKER put out a record in between "Unfun" and "Bivouac", and were really pissed off and listening to HOT WATER MUSIC while doing it. (I realize that this is a chronological impossibility, but work with me here, people.) Interesting, dense music, shouty vocals and great lyrics add up to another great release from No Idea. (DGJ)

(NO IDEA/PO Box 14636/GAINESVILLE, FL 32604)



SMUT PEDDLERS

"Silicone & STP" 7"

I had pretty high hopes for this 7" since it's on the same label that releases the awesome PUSHERS, but it didn't really bowl me over. Not once did it inspire me to air guitar. Pretty mediocre OC punk rock 'n' roll. (JER)

(HOSTAGE/7826 SEAGLEN DR./HB, CA 92648)



SNACK CRAPPLE POX

"Jimbo EP" 7"

I'm happy to report that after realizing how stupid their name was, the band decided to rename themselves KID SNACK. That makes this record



even better. Fans of the LILLINGTONS will be all over this. Songs that aren't exactly breaking any new ground in the world of upbeat pop punk, but they sure are good and catchy. Recorded and produced by Mass Giorgini, so you know it at least sounds amazing. (BAM)

(SHADY TROLL/11035 W. PICO BLVD./LOS ANGELES, CA 90064)

SOCIAL INFESTATION

"Redemption is Only Skin Deep" CD

Punishing release! At times the band reminds of DYSTOPIA, while there's some ASSUCK sounding stuff in here, too, as the band goes back and forth from slower beats to faster blast beats to straight thrash. The CD comes with a "song explanation sheet" where the band clarifies the meanings of their words. The content of their songs covers topics from homophobia to fucked-up parents. (AD)

(REACTIONARY RECORDS/712 PONCE DE LEON AVE./ATLANTA, GA 30306)



SOCIAL LEPERS

"One For The Ladies" 7" EP

Fucked-up and snotty. Hard rockin' punk that would fit nicely in your collection right between the DWARVES and the MEATMEN. I'm afraid the cover is so good on this that it's almost better than the record itself. (JC)

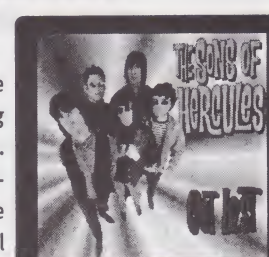
(BRONX CHEER/PO Box 13/GLASGO, SCOTLAND G12 8YT)



SONS OF HERCULES

"Get Lost" CD

There's some good rocking goIng on tonight. The SONS OF HERCULES deliver the total rock 'n' roll



goods with this, their third full length release. Think "Exile On Main Street"-era ROLLING STONES with healthy doses of NEW YORK DOLLS and NEW BOMB TURKS. I have already dubbed this one off for a friend because it's so good that I knew he would dig it. Another great band from Austin, TX. (JC)

(GET HIP/PO Box 666/CANONSBERG, PA 15317)

SOUR JAZZ

"No Values" CD

Stardust-flecked NYC guitar-slinger Mister Ratboy has found himself another burntout, badass crooner by the name of Lou Paris, and together they've concocted the perfect hybrid between IGGY's "Party" and "New Values" mid-70s albums. Pure genius, if IGGY's your thing. (DJM)

(NO LABEL INFO)



SOVINES

"Truckers Welcome" CD

Bitter romantics with drunken hearts of gold lame, the SOVINES would be bona fide radio hitmakers in a freer world, with their distinctive blend of power-pop catchiness ("Whisky Bottle Now") and more traditional roots-influenced barroom raunch 'n' roll. Think "Active Addiction" Paul Westerberg with the GEORGIA SATELLITES, or Tom Petty backed by JASON & THE SCORCHERS. Excellent songwriters and top-shelf live performers. (DJM)

(KINGPIN/PO Box 14234/CHICAGO, IL 60614)



SPECIAL DUTIES

"Punk Singles Collection" CD

Special Duties is a band that's been playing '77 style punk rock since about 1980. This is a collection of singles and compilation tracks. Some of it is great, some is pretty weak. Overall, a solid

record, featuring hits like "Violent Society" and "Bullshit Crass", and Jeff Bale's favorite track, "MRR Rules". Also has some cool covers of songs by the ADVERTS, the CLASH, and EXPLOITED. (JC)



(CAPTAIN OIL/BOX 501/HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS/HP108QA ENGLAND)

SPIRIT CARAVAN/SIXTY WATT SHAMAN

split 7"

SPIRIT CARAVAN sounds like OZZY OSBOURNE with SOUNDGARDEN as his backup band. SIXTY WATT SHAMAN isn't much better. (AD)



(MIA-TEE PEE RECORDS/315 CHURCH ST. 2ND FLOOR/NEW YORK, NY 10013)

STARLITES

"I Can't See You/Big Boss Man" 7"

"I Can't See You" is a great classic rockin' 60's punker that was originally released on the Barclay label in 1966. Get hip has rereleased this 7" with the flip side being a cover of Jimmy Reed's "Big Boss Man". Cool pix sleeve with b/w photos of the band in their heyday. A must for all charmkins. (TL)

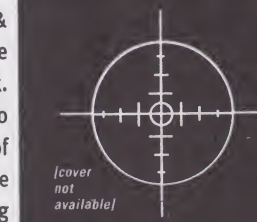


(GET HIP/COLUMBUS & PREBLE AVES/PITTSBURGH, PA 15233)

STARS & STRIPES

"Shaved For Battle" CD

Ah, STARS & STRIPES, the eternal paradox. How can a band so obviously bereft of brain cells, write such ass-kicking



music? The lyrics are an embarrassment. Even more so when you compare them to the output of the bands they'd love to ape - COCKSPARRER, LAST RESORT, SHAM et al. But the music is superb. Some great melodic lead guitar (a la LAST RESORT's 'Freedom') only enhances a more than solid outing. CD includes the bonus (?) of the 'Drop The Bomb' 7". (RK)

(TAANGI/706 PISMO CT./SAN DIEGO, CA 92109)

STATIKS

"Bombshell Baby" 7"

At least these guys/gal knew to change a letter in their name from the STATICS to the STATIKS. I went to see this band in SF, as a bunch of people did, wondering if it was the late, great STATICS from Seattle. It wasn't. Does it mean I was disappointed? Nah, these kids are just different, more political old school punk. They'd probably do well on TKO Records, who they happen to thank on their record anyway. Not bad, but not earth shattering either.



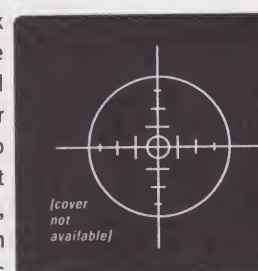
(THE LAST YEAR/413 HENSLEY ST./LITITZ PA 17543)

STEVE MCQUEENS

"Mission to Rock" 7"

Old as fuck release. The band is long dead and thank God for that. "Mission to Rock" is the best song they ever did, and it wasn't even that great. This band wanted to be the German RIP OFFS, but only managed to sound like a cheap imitation. The only thing I liked about this band was their name, which they ripped off from my first band. Throw in that they thought they were hot shit, and rude as fuck when they came to the U.S., and you get pure hate on my part. So fuck them - glad they are dead, another loser imitation band is gone. Let 'em make strudel.

(WRENCH/BCM Box 4049/LONDON WC1N 3XX)

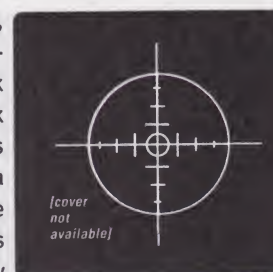


REVIEWS

STITCHES

"8 x 12" CD

Awesome trashy, snotty old-school punk rock with loads of "fuck you" attitude. This is a repress of a vinyl only release from a couple years back, and it totally rocks. A lot of bands are aping this style these days, but these guys really sound like they could've been opening for the DEAD BOYS in NY in 1978. Good stuff. (JER)



(VINYL DOG/812 SOUTH COAST HIGHWAY/LAGUNA BEACH, CA 92651)

STITCHES

"You Tear Me Out" 7"

This seems like a great pop punk single from 1977, with catchy songs layered with loud guitars. The STITCHES tend to layer on the snot when the choruses roll around, and these songs are no exception. Another great offering from a great band. (BAM)



(DEAD BEAT/PO Box 283/LOS ANGELES, CA 90078)

STOMPIN' HARVEY + THE FAST WRECKERS

"Is You Is" 7" EP

Murky swamp blues is the perfect description for this record. Three fine bluesy, garage tunes with so much hoodoo going on that you can practically hear the skeeters buzzin' around your head and smell the alligator stew cooking. Cool platter for any collection. (JC)



(VOODOO RYTHM/RODMATTSTRASSE 81/3014 BERN SWITZERLAND)

SHITLIST

STUPID BABIES GO MAD

"Turbo, Trash, Frenzy!" 7"

Japanese punk sitting musically between BLACK FLAG and EXPLOITED, with lyrics (at least from what I can decipher) more in the vein of the man to who's memory this record is dedicated, GG ALLIN. 7 songs, pretty damn cool. (BAM)

(ACME/PO Box 441/DRACUT, MA 01826)



SUBWAY THUGS

"Bastards" 7"

Ian Stuart vocals draped over STIFF LITTLE FINGERS-style music. This picture 7" is a cool way to check out what I think is one of today's best Canadian Oi bands. (BAM)

(DINK/PO Box 27813/WASHINGTON, DC 20038)



SWALLOW THIS

"Tell Me Vision" CD

You know, I remember when the status of West Beach Studios and resident engineer Donnell Cameron was at near legendary proportions, but the production here just straight up sucks. The drums sound like they were recorded in a bathroom on a four track, and the singer's horribly out of tune vocals are front and center in the mix. This guy's voice is just plain awful, and the music is your standard Fat-wannabe dreck. This is just terrible. (JER)

(BAD STAIN/PO Box 35254/PHOENIX, AZ 85069)



SWINGIN' UTTERS

"Brazen Head" EP

A solid collection of stuff — some recorded during the "Five Lessons Learned" sessions that reflect and expand on that record's diversity. Good stuff! (DGJ)

(FAT WRECK CHORDS/PO Box 193690/SF, CA 94119-3690)



SWINGIN' UTTERS/YOUTH BRIGADE

"BYO Split Series Volume 2" CD

As Todd and Money from Flipside say in the liner notes to the UTTERS side, "These guys aren't post-punk or post-Oi!, they're post-POGUES!" A great

side from SF's streetpunk heroes plus a surprisingly tough Oi! influenced side from YOUTH BRIGADE add up to a second really strong installment in BYO's split LP series. Though both bands have long histories and myriad releases under their belts (some of which sound very different than what's presented here), this isn't a bad place to start with either group. And if you're already a fan of these bands, you won't be disappointed with the performances. (DGJ)

(BYO/PO Box 67A64/LOS ANGELES, CA 90067)



TEEN IDOLS/SPREAD

"It Found A Voice" Split CD

The TEEN IDOLS are one of the finest pop-punk bands in the country. Great live shows, great hooks and harmonies. I loved their first record and early 7"s, but was pretty lukewarm on their "Pucker Up" CD. The four tunes here are thankfully closer to the magic of the earlier releases, super catchy and original. SPREAD play too fast for their own



good, sounding like a more hyper HI-STANDARD. (JC)

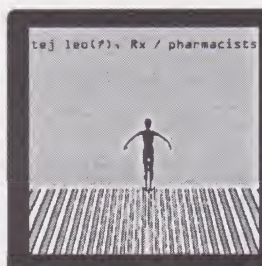
(HONEST DON'S/PO Box 192027/SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94119)

TEJ LEO

"Rx/Pharmacists" CD

Goofy pop style lyrics. This tries to incorporate different elements via scratching, effects on vocals and samples, but comes across really half-assed, overconfident and rushed. (BB)

(GERN BLANDSTEN RECORDS/PO Box 356/RIVER EDGE, NJ 07661)



TELL TALE HEARTS

"Live Vol.#2-Later That Same Night in Springfield" LP

Australia's Corduroy records has released this live collection from San Diego's infamous garage punkers THE TELL TALE HEARTS. If you were a charmk in the 80's then you should know all about them. This LP is a live recording from one of their shows in Springfield, Missouri. The sound quality is pretty okay for a live recording. I guess it was recorded on a one track reel to reel tape. Though I find live LP's to be a bit boring, if you're a fan of this era of garage punk then you'll definitely want this. (TL)

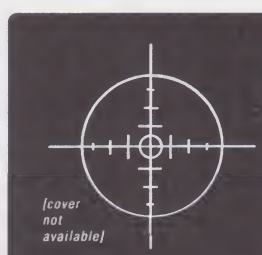
(CORDUROY RECORDS/41 FELLOWS ST./KEW VIC 3101 AUSTRALIA)



TEMPLARS

"Clockwork Orange Horror Show" CD EP

The 6 tracks that originally comprised their double 7" from '1995. It's certainly not enhanced by a tinny production, and the laid-back, almost



REVIEWS

psychedelic r'n'b feel to some of their songs is in bizarre contrast to the more 'traditional' gravelly Oi! vocals. Includes covers by MAJOR ACCIDENT and ANGELIC UPSTARTS. It's always struck me as a little strange how the various youth cults will, on occasion, accept almost any genre of music, so long as the performers look the part.....is 'skin-head music' anything at all played by folks who wear boots & braces? (RK)

(VULTURE ROCK/PO BOX 40104/ABQ, NM 87196)

30footFALL

"Ever Revolving Never Evolving" CD

It's always a danger when bands put cover songs on their records. More often than not, they usually show up the weakness of the originals. While it's true that a fine version of the CURE's 'Just Like Heaven' is probably the standout track here, the rest of this record is pretty enjoyable SoCal style melodic hardcore, well played/produced, with a ferociously sloppy attack to skew the mix a little. (RK)

(NITRO/7071 WARNER AVENUE, SUITE F-736/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92647)

TRICKY WOO

"Sometimes I Cry" CD

I command all y'all rock 'n' roll motherfuckers out there to hunt this down and buy it! Detroit rock at its finest (even though they're from Canada!). Amazing mixture of MC5, STOOGES, and AC/DC. I believe that Man's Ruin will be re-releasing this in the states here in the next month or so. Buy this now, thank me later. (BAM)

(SONIC UNYON/PO BOX 57347/JACKSON STATION, HAMILTON ON CANADA)

TIME FLIES

"On Our Way" CD

If someone told me that GORILLA BISCUITS had recorded a record in their heyday, shelved it,

and now I was listening to it, I would completely believe them. I would think it was damn good too! I'm usually not big on bands directly biting other bands, but this CD is mind-blowing. Anyone who wishes GB had done a powerful follow up to the almighty "Start Today", go buy this. (BAM)

(INDECISION/PO BOX 5781/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92615)

TIME IN MALTA

"Construct & Demolish" CD-EP

The only reason I grabbed this CD to review was that I went to see another band play the other night, and this band was also on the bill. They were ugly, they were pissed, and they just might have been the best live band I've ever seen in my life. Musically stuck somewhere between way aggressive screaming hardcore (but not that grindcore shit), and AVAIL. Yes, AVAIL. I'm blown away by this CD. I hope that this review entices at least one person out there to check out this record, as you will be the happiest motherfucker around! (BAM)

(ESCAPE ARTIST/PO BOX 472/DOWNTOWN, PA 19335)

TIMEOUTS

"Earth Is My Second Favorite Planet" CD

Now, this may very well be the vodka talking, but god-damnit, I like this. Dorky pop punk that reminds me of New York's EGGHEAD. The last song actually sounds like the PSHYSEDELIC FURRS, for a little while at least. Anyway, this is catchy, fun stuff, and that's a pretty big complement coming from a jaded asshole like myself. (JER)

(LET'S GO!/PO BOX 156/CAMPBELL, CA 95009)

TINKLE

"Rejected" CD

Despite the unfortunate name, this is actually some highly enjoyable pop punk, mining the fields between GREEN DAY and SICKO. I heard a few songs from these guys on the "Better Than Sevens" comp I reviewed for this issue, and they had some production problems. Although the production here is far from perfect, it's not as bad as the stuff on the comp. They also remind me a little of LIMP when they try to incorporate some ska riffs into the scheme of things. I'd recommend they stay away from the ska stuff, but overall this was a decent, catchy release. (JER)

(REINFORCEMENT/96 EHRET AVE./HARRINGTON PARK, NJ 07640)

'TONE

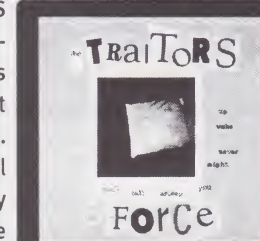
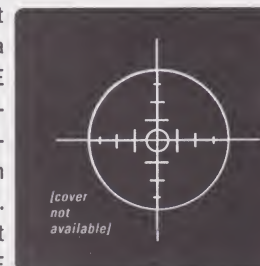
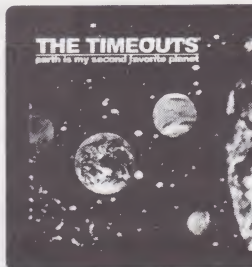
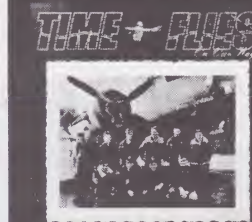
"Wide Eyes and Nonsense..." LP

Awesome, tight power-pop ala BUZZCOCKS & THE JAM with a generous helping of two-tone ska thrown into the mix. Similar to what bands like THE STRIKE & APOCALYPSE BABIES are doing nowadays. Very English. I like this kind of stuff, and these guys sound like the real deal, so check 'em out. (JER)

(NO ADDRESS)

TRAITORS/FORCE split 7"

The TRAITORS bring megaphone-style vocals laid over very fast noisy rock n' roll. The FORCE will unfortunately never receive the



SHITLIST

attention that they deserve, as they have since disbanded. Their bassist is now playing in AFI, whose early sound isn't too different from what the FORCE offer here. Aggressive hardcore punk, with good chord progressions. This 7" is limited to 600 copies, so if this sounds up your alley, get on it soon. (BAM)

(JOHAN'S FACE/PO Box 479164/CHICAGO, IL 60647)

TROUBLEMAKERS

"Versus The Doomsday Device" CD

Real classic surf sound. They have the DICK DALE liquid guitar sound down pat. Fifteen tracks that stay fresh and interesting. Dipping into a well of surf sounds and effects, coming out with a well rounded and entertaining CD. I always wonder how instrumental bands name their songs. (JC)

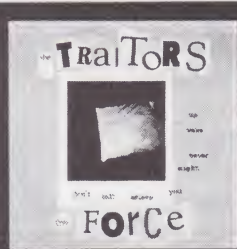
(DIONYSUS/PO Box 1975/BURBANK, CA 91507)

TRIGGERS

"Straight To Your Ears" 7"

Great '77 style pop rock with a lo-fi recording to accent it's brilliance. Sounds almost exactly like mid-era SWINGIN' UTTERS, but the songwriting and recording style make it stick out on its own level. Mail order this - you'll be quite happy. (BAM)

(HATED YOUTH/VIA BRIONE, 9/38033 CODINO (TN) ITALY)



T.V. KILLERS

"Playin Bad Music Since '92" CD

The Frenchies do it again. Pretty snotty '77 style punk rock ala DEAD BOYS, PAGANS with a little ANGRY SAMOANS thrown in. If this was an American band it'd probably say a big so-so, but I love the French accents, especially on "Babyboomers, Motherfuckers". Other stand outs are "Down and Out But Real" and "Burn My Mind". They will be playing S.F. soon, and I'll have to check em out. Fans of TKO bands and THE STITCHES come on down. (TL)

(DEAD BEAT RECORDS/PO Box 283/L.A., CA 90078)



TWENTY2

"Porn Rock" CD

When I saw the cover, read the title and saw the very large "NOW GO OUT AND BUY SOME PORN" on the lyric sheet I thought to myself, "Oh no...what kind of luntheaded fucking disaster is this?" Well, the joke's sort of on me - these Canadians play some pretty solid, thoughtful skatepunk. They remind me a bit of WIZO, or maybe a better STRUNG OUT (it's not exactly hard to be better than STRUNG OUT...unless you're SIX GOING ON SEVEN). They've definitely got a bit of a Metal influence - the musicianship is rock solid, and the guitarist manages to be sorta wanky without being annoying about it. Not bad at all. (DG)

(SPRINGMAN/PO Box 2043/CUPERTINO, CA 95015-2043)



UK SUBS

"Huntington Beach" CD

The 8th SUBS LP, and first studio full-length following the supreme 'Endangered Species', and the disintegration of that classic line-up. The SUBS have



never been the same without Nicky Garratt, and this suffers accordingly. It's not a bad record, but if you're going to get one SUBS re-release, snap up 'Endangered Species'. (RK)

(CAPTAIN OI/PO Box 501/HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP10 8QA/ENGLAND)

UNBELIEVABLES

"The Desperate Edge Of Now" CD

The UNBELIEVABLES seem to be more into the art of making records than the more regimented idea of band practices and such. This record is all hand done, cover, vinyl etc. Extremely limited pressing. Four songs on one side of the white vinyl, the other side spray paint stenciled. The music is lo-fi and dissonant. All tracks are done with a one-take, no overdubs approach. At their best, they conjure up a BUTTHOLE SURFERS/CAPTAIN BEEFHEART appeal. At their worst, they can be a bit of a test on the listener's patience. (JC)

(26 PADDOCK ROAD/LEWES EAST SUSSEX, BN7 1UJ ENGLAND)



UNDER THE GUN

"Nowhere to Run" CD

Usually when a band lists all the "cool" people involved in a project, it amounts to just names on a CD jacket, and no real musical presence. But in this case, Roger Miret, and CIV, knew they were working with some good talent. Think GREEN DAY, various pop punk bands, YOUTH BRIGADE, with some ALL thrown in the mix. An overall well-produced CD with the potential to have a cute chick following, now who the hell's gonna complain about that?(JM)

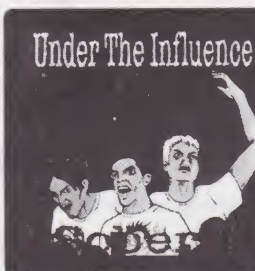
(MENDIT/P.O. Box 1096/NEW YORK, NY 10003)



UNDER THE INFLUENCE

"Sober?!" CD

Despite the terrible name (and subsequent logo; a guy wearing a keg on his head), this isn't all that bad. It's a little one dimensional, staying with the 1-2, 1-2 thrash beat for most of the songs, but it's not a bad piece of NOFX influenced melodic hardcore. (JER)



(SUPERSIZE/2401 S. LAKESHORE BLVD. #11-103/AUSTIN, TX 78741)

UNITED

"Distorted Vision" CD

Attention metal-heads! This one's for you. Japan's UNITED started out as a JUDAS PRIEST cover band back in 1981, but evolved into their own sound soon afterwards. It's amazing that this band is still around. Their sound fluctuates somewhere between thrash and more traditional guitar-driven metal. At times, it gets kind of corny, but overall, this is a solid metal release. (AD)



(HOWLING BULL AMERICA/P.O. Box 40129/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94140-0129)

UNRUH

"Setting Fire to Sinking Ships" CD

I don't like the singer's voice in this band. Musically, UNRUH play hardcore that at times has a NYHC chugga-chugga sound, but then they'll break down into more thrash beats with "Satan" type backup vocals. This CD is okay, but it seems like they're more of a live band. (AD)



(PESSIMISER REOCRDS/P.O. Box 1070/HERMOSA BEACH, CA 90254)

US BOMBS

"Put Strength In The Final Blow" CD

I'm relatively certain that this is a repress of their first, hard to find record from a few years back. It's got some weird production (there's way too much reverb on the vocals, and the guitars are buried) and Duane's vocals have improved quite a bit since this recording, but it's still worthwhile. Check it out. (JER)



(ALIVE/PO Box 7112/BURBANK, CA 91510)

VALENTINE KILLERS

7" EP

This is some fine kick-ass garage rock from an up 'n' coming Olympia/Seattle band that's actually been around for awhile. Originally known as the NOTORIOUS BRODIES, they've had some personnel shifts and were reborn as the VALENTINE KILLERS. Four short/fast tunes with ripping guitars and maniac lead singing in a DEAD BOYS/PAGANS style. The best tunes are "Methanal" and "Devil's Night." (AW)



(MORTVILLE/PO Box 4263/AUSTIN, TX 78765)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"A Compilation Of Warped Music II" CD

3 bands, 23 tracks. I suspect most everyone will know the bands herein - H2O, DROPKICK MURPHYS, PENNYWISE, 7 SECONDS, SICK OF IT ALL, UNWRITTEN LAW, MOLOTOV, FRENZAL RHOMB etc. Irregardless, this is a good sampler of the latest material from these bands. Includes the added bonus (?) of unreleased tracks from



REVIEWS

BLINK 182, LESS THAN JAKE, AQUABATS and MXPX (who will surely burn in hell for this one). (RK)

(SIDE ONE DUMMY/6201 SUNSET BLVD, SUITE 211/HOLLYWOOD, CA 90028)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Barefoot & Pregnant" CD

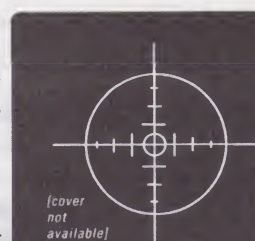
Reflex Records were set up in 1981 to release HÜSKER DÜ music, and document the wider Minneapolis (and beyond) hardcore scene, to which there were intimately connected. The original comp was a cassette only release, compiled from cassette demos and rehearsals - 200 made. While some of the bigger bands - HÜSKER DÜ, REPLACEMENTS, RED MEAT - might be familiar, what stands out is the staggering breadth, diversity, and quality (in terms of songpenmanship) of the early scene. In those days, hardcore was a very broad church, and all the better for it. (RK)

(REFLEX/GARAGE D'OR/3015 LYNDALE AVE. SOUTH/MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55408)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Before You Were Punk 2" CD

Another bunch of punk bands (12 in all) covering cool 80's new wave songs. Bigger bands this time around, and some odd song choices. I can't imagine anyone wanting to cover an OMD song, but NOFX does a pretty good job at it. THE GET UP KIDS do a suitably emo version of THE CURE's "Close To Me", and the GOTOHELLS do a great version of THE CARS' "Just What I Needed", but the top song honors have to go to ALL for their stellar version of BILLY IDOL'S sneering, fist waving anthem "Rebel Yell." One problem; there are some songs that you cannot improve upon. Good bands know when this is the case. Apparently, THE SUICIDE MACHINES are lacking this foresight, since



SHITLIST

they destroyed THE ROMANTICS' signature hit "What I Like About You." You can't fuck with the classics, man. (JER)

(VAGRANT/PMB #361/2118 WILSHIRE BLVD./SANTA MONICA, CA 90403)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Better Than Sevens" CD

Personally, 7"s are my favorite form of music. They're the perfect length, and you don't get too much of a band at once. This disc is supposed to be the equivalent of a 7" from each of the eight bands here. I'd rather have the vinyl, but there's some good stuff here. I was gonna go through band by band, but then I thought "fuck that", so here are the highlights. TINKLE; peppy, hook filled pop punk that suffers from shitty production, but is good nonetheless. THE YOUNG HASSELHOFFS; much the same as TINKLE, but without the production problems. Kind of in the MTX vein. Probably my favorite band of the bunch. THE GOONS; kind of an 80's hardcore feel crossed with, like, NEW BOMB TURKS or something. Interesting. The rest aren't bad either (except for HEFT & SANTA'S DEAD [what an awful, awful name]), you should definitely find this. (JER)

(REINFORCEMENT/96 EBRET AVE./HARRINGTON PARK, NJ 07640)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Breaking The Rules #9"

I tend to like this series better than the KBD series. These tend to be more consistent, and usually lean towards the catchier side. This volume is no exception. 19 amazing long lost power gems from '78-'82, with a couple of the stand out tracks being JETSONS "Genetically Stupid", and LAW's "Reason For Treason". Almost any volume of BREAKING THE RULES will give you your fix, but this might actually be my favorite



to date.

(PETER P./PO Box 30 37 53/10726 BERLIN GERMANY)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Brewing" 7"

This is a compilation with four bands, SLOWSIDE-DOWN, NINEIRON-SPITFIRE, BOTCH, and JOUGH DAWN BAKER. Each band contributes one song each and it's a good sampler of what's happening in the Pacific Northwest. While the bands all have their own sound, they are all similar in that they play varying adaptations of "emotional hardcore." Like I said, this is a good sampler if you want to check out that scene. (AD)

(EXCURSION RECORDS/P.O. Box 20224/SEATTLE, WA 98102)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Carry On Oi!!" CD

CD reissue of classic early 80's compilation. A who's who of British Oi! featuring the BUSSINESS, PARTISANS, PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES, BLITZ, 4 SKINS plus many more Punk/street poet Gary Johnson starts off the CD with his Oi! manifest "United". All the tracks on here are originals and showcase the bands in their prime. Comes with extensive liner notes and packaging that makes this an essential part of any proper street-punk/Oi! collection. (JC)

(CAPTAIN Oi!/PO Box 501/HIGH WYCOMBE BUCKS/HP10 8QA)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Daydreaming With An Empty Stationwagon" CD

At first glance, this looks like one of those punk 7"s with way too many bands doing silly songs that are way too short. But wait! That's just the packaging! Dizzy Records are just going for that 7" aesthetic, this is actually a CD. Lots of cool



fun tracks from the likes of YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS, KUNG FU MONKEYS, the LIZARDS, and a bunch more. (JC)

(DIZZY/PO Box 250878/NY NY 10025)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Detroit Rock City; Music From The Motion Picture" CD

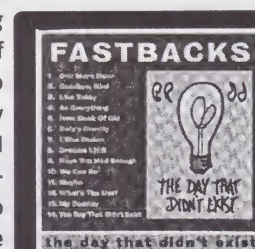
Apparently, this movie is about some kids trying to get to a KISS concert in Detroit, so obviously the soundtrack is all about KISS. It's got KISS themselves doing some of the bigger hits, plus covers of KISS songs by bands like THE DONNAS & EVERCLEAR. There's some rockin' going on here, but there's also a lot of crap like MARILYN MANSON & PANTERA. I dunno, if that sounds appealing to you, go for it, but you're probably better off just picking up the originals. (JER)

(MERCURY)

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Fastmusic Kills" CD

I'm just assuming that this is one of those \$2-\$3 cheapo comps, and actually a damn good one. I would highly recommend this to anyone into skate punk, melodic h.c., or even pop punk. There are some real gems on here, and discovering a new favorite band is priceless. Check this out. (BAM)

(FASTMUSIC/368 BROADWAY #511/NEW YORK, NY 10013)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Faster, Pussy...Attack! Tora! Tora! Tora!" CD

Japanese bands always seem to come with a trailerful of hype attached. If this domestic sampler of 9 independent combos is anything to go by, it's fully justified. Some of the names may be familiar - the pop punk of the GARLIC BOYS, or the driving, heavy hardcore of YELLOW MACHINE-GUN. But irrespective of genre (which ranges from thrash to metal/grind core) the standard is remarkably high. Well worth checking out. (RK)

(HOWLING BULL AMERICA/PO Box 40129/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94140)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Fellow Ship Of The Fat Ship" 7"

3 songs from one of my new favorite noisy punk n' roll bands, HENRY FIATS OPEN SORE, and 2 from a slicker, yet still quite rockin' SKELETT. The winner of this battle is you. GO BUY THIS!! (BAM)

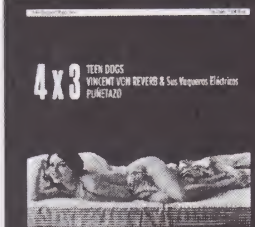
(KEN ROCK/SKARRETORP CENTRUM 12/586 44 LINKÖPING SWEDEN)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"4 x 3" CD

As you might have guessed from the title, what we have here is three bands doing four songs a piece. All the info here is in Spanish (since this is a Spanish label), so the only thing I can read is band names. They compare the first band, TEEN DOGS, to the DEVIL DOGS & MC5. I'll give 'em the former, by I don't hear the latter. Pretty rockin' stuff; they even do a decent CIRCLE JERKS cover. The next band, VINCENT VON REVERB, namedrops THE WHO & MOTT THE HOOPLE. I'm really not familiar



with either of those bands, so I'll just tell you that these guys play glammy rock n' roll with wanky guitar leads. The last band, PUNETAZO, doesn't have any comparisons in their write up, so I'll go with NEW BOMB TURKS. Sounds like they saved the best for last. This is definitely a worthwhile comp if you can get your hands on it. (JER)

(NO TORORROW/PO Box 1134/12080 CASTELLON/SPAIN)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Kitten" CD

A raging live document of the Minneapolis hardcore scene. Recorded over 2 nights in October 1982, this brings you 33 tracks from the likes of HÜSKER DÜ, MAN SIZED ACTION, RED MEAT, WILFUL NEGLECT... Originally released on cassette, so quality is hardly late 90s alterna-rock standards. But, it more than makes up for it with power, passion, and insane thrash! (RK)

(REFLEX/GARAGE D'OR/2015 LYNDALE AVE. SOUTH/MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55408)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Last Chance In Portland" CD

New label with an all-Portland band comp. There's some really good stuff here. BEIR GUT is my favorite, reminding me quite a bit of "Electric" era CULT, right down to the vocals. 800 OCATANE, SILVERKINGS, BIG JIM & BOMF all turn in memorable tracks as well. I was really dreading this CD, but it turned out to be a pleasant surprise. (JER)

(LAST CHANCE/3812-B SE DIVISION/PORTLAND, OR 97202)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Mission Control Presents Superheroes Series Volume 2"

A decent comp. with a lot of variety as far as genres go. DALEK is a hip hop project that has a good mc and very heavy background that

REVIEWS

reminds me of some FAUST. DARK-EST HOUR is a very hilarious typical vomiting cookie monster voice metal band. They do rock. THE LAPSE was THE VAN PELT. It's their new name. I love POLVO and they reminded me of them except I didn't like the dude's voice.

(MISSION CONTROL/PIAZZA MALTONI 16/50065 PONTASSIEVE(FI) ITALIA)

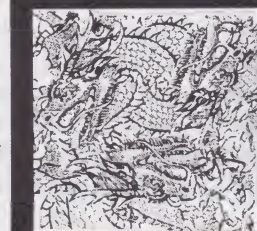


VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Noise Kills Punk Rock Dead" CD

A bunch of artsy weirdness - and not in a good way. Listening to this was annoying and a general waste of anyone's time. This is the kind of record Yuppies would buy and feel terribly avant garde. (BB)

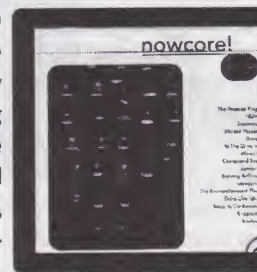
(OPULENCE! RECORDS/PO Box 2070/WILMINGTON, NC 28402-2071)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Nowcore!" CD

Half of this CD seems to have been conceived by someone listening outside my college dorm room around 1995/96: JAWBOX, SAMIAM, SEAWEEED, KNAPSACK, HUM, and DRIVE LIKE JEHU all remind me of that time in my life. Throw in some tracks by some of today's Hot Rock/Emo stars like BRAID, AT THE DRIVE IN, and MODEST MOUSE and the PROMISE RING and you have the making of a record that's fairly representative of what sensitive boys with glasses and large noses are listening to these days. For the record, although I think the DISMEMBERMENT PLAN's "The Ice of Boston" is brilliant, and I simply can't get enough of BURNING AIRLINES' "Wheaton Calling" (spot



SHITLIST

the CLASH riff), I do not have a large nose or glasses. Oh and one other thing about this record that rules: It's on K-tel, mama! (DG)

(K-TEL/2605 FERNBROOK LANE NORTH/MINNEAPOLIS, MN 5547-4736)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"O.C.'s 5400 Day Revolution" CD

A massive double ACD compilation of twenty years of Orange County punk, hardcore and garage. Like all compilations, this is somewhat spotty, though with 47 bands, there is more than a smattering of gems. Lots of famous names - TSOL, ADOLESCENTS, SOCIAL DISTORTION, NO FOR AN ANSWER - are missing; equally, lots are here: AGENT ORANGE, CADILLAC TRAMPS, MIA, BIG DRILL CAR, GAMEFACE, FAR SIDE, FINAL CONFLICT, UNIFORM CHOICE etc etc. Not bad. Not bad. (RK)

(SUPERKOOL RECORDS/PO Box 20184/FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA 92728)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Oi! Oi! A Tribute To AC/DC" 7" EP

Now here's a great idea! They got four skin-head/Oi bands to cover AC/DC, and with good results. I haven't heard of any of these bands before, but they all do a commendable job covering the Aussie rock gods' songs. Truth be told I'm an AC/DC fan from way back (I even saw 'em when Bon Scott was alive!), and these bands rock out accordingly with a rough, streetrock sound that suits their "interpretations" well. Hats off to the FATSKINS, the BLOODY SODS, TERMINUS CITY and the MAIN STREET SAINTS for doing this. (AW)

(FLAT/PO Box 7504/QUINCY, MA 02269)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Play Your Own Theme Song" 7" EP

Four great bands that go great together, all playing their own unique themes. The CHUMPS rule. Snotty, self-deprecating, and fucked up. The COMMIES play spastic 4/4 time skate punk. LOS TIGRES GUAPOS bust out some trashy guitar rock en espanol. The RECLUSIVES play in an old school style and have a brown recluse, the world's gnarliest spider, as their logo. (JC)

(MORTVILLE/PO Box 4263/AUSTIN TX 78765)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Punk Rock Jukebox Volume 2" CD

"Your favorite bands doing their favorite old school punk songs." Overall this is a good disc. Standouts include the always stellar KID DYNAMITE covering CIRCLE JERKS, DROPKICK MURPHYS covering THE NIPS and (as weird as it sounds) SAMIAM doing "Search And Destroy." THE ENKINDELS also do a good job at covering (practically note for note) "White Wedding", but I have to wonder what the point is (since the singer's voice isn't up to par with Billy Idol's.) Anyway, I like theme comps, and this one's a keeper. (JER)

(BLACKOUT/PO Box 1575/NY, NY 10009)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Pushing Scandanavian Rock To The Man" CD

A stellar batch of Scandanavian rock 'n' roll. An area that is turning into a mecca of great shit lately. Super cuts by FLAMING SIDEBURNS, HEL-LACOPTERS, TUR-BONEGRO, NOMADS and many more. Best cover

of any compilation this year. (JC)

(BAD AFRO/POSTE RESTRANTE,FREDRICKSBERG,ALL'E 6/DK-1820/FREDRICKSBERG,DENMARK)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Radioslok" 7"

The OUT FOUR from France has a great sloppy TELEVISION rock sound. The GRAB-BIES sound like snotty brats trying to act "down". Everything else is nice standard garage rock from Europe. (BB)

(SLOK/FERMA POSTA 37036/S. MARTINO B.A./VERONA, ITALIA)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Reproach" 7"

Eight hardcore/grindcore bands cover eight essential N E G A T I V E APPROACH songs. Bands include D R O P D E A D , M.I.T.B., and SPAZZ. I don't think anything will ever touch the originals, but here's to trying. (BAM)

(UGLY POP/2 BLOOR ST. SUITE 100 Box 477/TORONTO, ON CANADA)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Scratches And Needles" CD

These tribute records rarely work. This one does. It's a tribute to the NILS - A wonderful, woefully underappreciated Canadian melodic rock/punk band, along the lines of early DOUGHBOYS/later HÜSKER DÜ. Ironically, where the NILS fell down, was the overproduction of their recorded output (two 12"s and an LP). These tracks actually enhance the originals by and large, with their injection of a little more oomph, and a little less

polish. Most of the bands on this comp - with the exception of DOWN BY LAW, SINKHOLE and DOC HOPPER - aren't that well know. What shines through is the quality of the music. An incredible tribute to an awesome band. (RK)

(MAG WHEEL RECORDS/PO Box 115, STN. R/MONTREAL, QUEBEC, H2S 3K6/CANADA)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Searchin' for Shakes" CD

A pretty damn fabulous compilation of Swedish beat from 1965 to 1968. Among the many guitar-heavy classics here are the LEE KINGS' rave up "On My Way", the NAMELOSERS' "Do-Ao", the FRIENDS' punky "Empty Handed", the SHANES' "I Don't Want Your Love", STEAMPACKET II's freakbeatish "Take Her Anytime", ANNAABE HOX's psych-like "Bo Bo Boggie Pack", and the list goes on and on. There are also some cool Mersey-style tracks herein, such as the MASCOTS' crisp "Words Enough to Tell You" and the BEATHOVENS' moody "Summer Son". Hands-down rockin'. (JB)

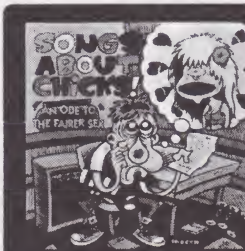
(AMIGO/Box 6058/102 31 STOCKHOLM/SWEDEN)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Songs About Chicks! An Ode To The Fairer Sex" CD

This is exactly what I'm into. I love broken heart shit like this. There's a bunch of great bands here, some well known (LIMP, DYNAMITE BOY, GOB) and some newcomers (MORONIQUE, WHIPPER-SANAPPER, etc). Twenty seven in all, and way more good than bad. Tank Records is off to a strong start with this awesome comp. (JER)

(TANK/PO Box 40009/NEW BEDFORD, MA 02744)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Spring Sucks" CD

Another label sampler, this one from Springman. There's a lot of good stuff here. My favorites are CO-ED, CAUSTIC NOTIONS, SHOWER WITH GOATS, LANEMYER & BOXCAR. Nineteen songs in all, most falling into the speedy pop punk area. (JER)

(SPRINGMAN/PO Box 2043/CUPERTINO, CA 95015)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Start Your Engines" CD

Revved up hot rod, hillbilly punk. 28 bands ding their best greased up gear-head rock. Stand out bands are the GAZA STRIPPERS, TEEN IDOLS, REO SPEEDEALER and the GOTOHELLS. These bands aren't necessarily representative of the quality of the entire CD. More often than not this record gets bogged down in a goofy theme and it's hard to get all the way through it without getting really tired of what they are doing. (JC)

(SIDE ONE DUMMY/6201 SUNSET BLVD. SUITE 211/HOLLYWOOD, CA 90028)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Sultan Records-A Harem Of Hits" CD

A fine collection of trashy lo-fi bands. The SCAT BAG BOOSTERS and the SPACESHITS being my favorites, but all are pretty meaty. Not a stinker in all of the 22 tracks. A solid pick for any garage rock enthusiast. This is a compilation of 7" that came out on Sultan Records over the last few years, plus several bonus tracks. (JC)

(SULTAN/Box 2/MONTREAL PQ H4A 1X0 CANADA)



REVIEWS

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Teenage Shutdown, Move it Frantic Stomp Fracas Revved up & Rowdy 1964-1968" LP

Mr. Tim Warren keeps coughing up more killer meaty 60's punk comps to keep Peepin and Russell screamin' for more. This one consists more of frat rock

stompers like the soul-rockin' "Crazy World" By PECK'S BAD BOYS, the farfisa rocker "I Want Love" by the INDIVIDUALS, and the ass-kickin REASON WHY doin "One More Time" There's plenty of unreleased junk on this slab-o-wax so do not hesitate to run to your local record shop and get it, charmkins! Go for it!!(TL)

(NO ADDRESS)



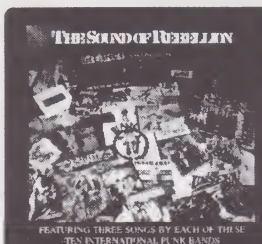
VARIOUS ARTISTS

"The Sound of Rebellion" CD

You get it all with this 30 song compilation of some of the world's most recognized "REAL" punk bands. That's right, bands like the Unseen and

Oxymoron, who still sport the trade mark hair-do's that pissed your parents off! DISSCOCKS, ANTI-FLAG, DEFIANCE, BRAINDANCE, and others finish off this bad boy. Buy it, cause pretty boy punk bands are getting tiring!! (JM)

(ADD RECORDS/270 CENTRAL ST/HINGHAM, MA. 02043)



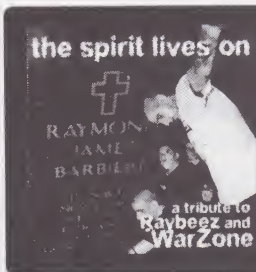
VARIOUS ARTISTS

"The Spirit Lives On" CD

This is a tribute to the late Raymond James Barbjeri (Raybeez), lead singer of one of the most inspirational hardcore bands ever to come out of New York, WARZONE. 27 bands cover 27 WARZONE songs. Some outstanding tracks include BREAKDOWN, HOODS, and POWER-

SHITLIST

HOUSE. While some tracks may fall way short of capturing the spirit of the original, I'm sure Ray is looking down, proud as hell. (BAM)



(HATE CORE/PMB 287 1075 BROAD RIPPLE AVE/INDPLS., IN 46220)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Voice Of A New Generation" CD

In the case of 90% of these tribute compilations, the covers are probably pretty fun to do, but usually add little to the songs. BLITZ were a great band. Are there great bands on here? Sure. The problem is, everybody does the songs so straight forward that few would be better than listening to the originals. Good to own as a collection of songs for your punk rock jukebox, the hits are all represented. (JC)



(RHYTH VICAR/UNIT 25 BUSHELL BUSINESS ESTATE/HITHERCROFT, WALINGFORD/OXON OX10 ENGLAND)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Wet Feet" CD

Only three bands here, all turning in 6 tunes. So what you're basically getting here is three eps on one CD. GUILT-TRIP is up first. They play Fat Wreck style melodic punk similar to NO USE FOR A NAME, but with weaker vocals. DARRYL'S GROCERY BAG reminds me of FAIRLANE, who in turn remind of NOFX. ONE SHOT LEFT's first song is called "Blink", apparently named for the band they stole their style from. All in all, you get 18 songs from a few mediocre pop punk bands. (JER)



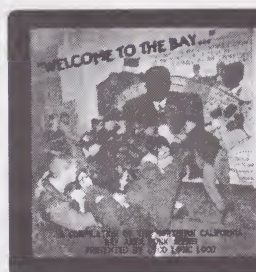
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(METER/Box #368, 440/10816 MACLEOD TRAIL SOUTH/CALGARY, ALBERTA/CANADA T2J 5N8)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Welcome to the Bay" CD

The name says it all, this is the current makers and shakers of the SF Bay area. From Berkeley to San Jose and everywhere in between. OPPRESSED LOGIC, IDIOTS, CHEAP AS FUCK, THE FORGOTTEN, and a load of others give it up on this one. For a vinyl format, Beer City's got you covered, but if CD's are your thing, hit up Industrial Strength.



(BEER CITY/P.O. Box 26033/MILWAUKEE, WI. 53226-0035)

(INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH/2824 REGATTA BLVD./RICHMOND, CA. 94804)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"World of Ska" CD

Admittedly, Ska has bored the crap out of me. With exception of say, DAVE HILLYARD or THE RHYTHM DOCTORS, I have no real interest in this stuff anymore. But this has some great material worth mentioning. JUDGE DREAD, always a favorite in my book, LAUREL AITKEN never stops rocking, and some familiar faces like THE SELECTER, RICO RODRIQUEZ, and BIG 5. Thumbs up if you ask me. (JM)

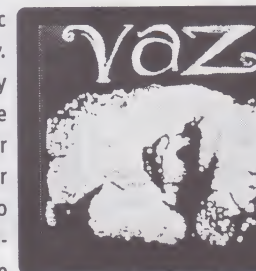


(TRIPLE X/P.O. Box 862529/LOS ANGELES, CA. 90086-2529)

VAZ

"Hey One Cell/No leaf Clover" 7"

Brutal, chaotic and noisy. Sounds like they were beating the shit out of their instruments. Guitar and drum combo that was HAMMER-HEAD take it one step closer to Hell. (JC)



(REPTILLIAN/4035 BROADWAY/BALTIMORE, MD 21231)

VENDETTAS

"Halloween" 7" EP

Rootsy little rock 'n' roll record. Along the lines of the CRAMPS meet the HI-FIVES. Includes covers of LOUIE PRIMA's ultra silly sci-fi song "Beep Beep" and r+r classic "Putty". Nice horror/sci-fi record, out just in time for Halloween. Also includes some of coolest 7" packaging I've ever seen. (JC)

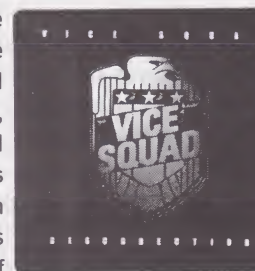


(WORRYBIRD/PO Box 95485/ATLANTA, GA 30347)

VICE SQUAD

"Resurrection" CD

VICE SQUAD are one of those bands that I loved when I heard them, but I never owned any of their records or knew much about them. This seems to be kind of a greatest hits package. I say seems to be, because there's no info on the packaging to tell me different and I recognize a few of the tracks as classics. Beki Bondage is one of the most powerful female singers in punk history. This collection showcases that power as well as a ferocious band that play amazingly all throughout this collection. (JC)



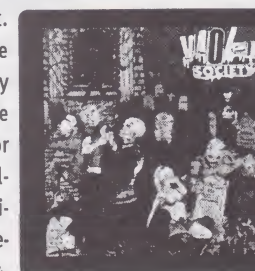
(RHYTH VICAR/UNIT 25 BUSHELL BUSINESS ESTATE/HITHERCROFT, WALINGFORD/OXON OX10 ENGLAND)

VIOLENT SOCIETY

"From The Vault" CD

Fucking great. Snotty, aggressive streetpunk. Heavy english influence (Think G.B.H or BLITZ). This is a collection of 7"s, compilation tracks and unreleased stuff 1993-94.

Good introduction to a pretty great band. (JC)



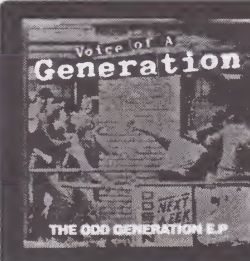
(NESAK INTERNATIONAL/14000 MILITARY TRAIL 208 A/DELROY BEACH, FL 33484)

VOICE OF A GENERATION

"The Odd Generation" 7"

Way above-average aggressive street-punk that would make even the DROPKICK MURPHYS sit down and take notes. 6 amazing punk gems that leave me craving more. Someone (TKO?) better sign these guys and get a full length out for them fast! (BAM)

(DSS/#606-233 ABBOTT ST./VANCOUVER, BC V6B 2K7 CANADA)



VOODOO GLOW SKULLS

"Exitos Al Cabron" CD

All Spanish release from Frank & co. featuring mostly previously released songs, with a couple of new tunes. You know what these guys sound like by now, so you don't need me to analyze them for you. (JER)

(GRITA/PO Box 1216/NEW YORK, NY 10156)



GINO WASHINGTON & THE ATLANTICS

"Come Monkey With Me" 7" EP

I love everything by Gino Washington!! It's awesome that Norton Records rereleased a compilation of his singles from his 1963 sessions at Detroit's Speciality Studios. This 7" is a couple of songs off that LP: rockin' doo-woppy soul stompers such as "Out of This World" and "Come Monkey With Me". Both of these tracks are guaranteed to get your toes a-tappin' and yer ass a Wigglin'. A must - so go and get it!! (TL)

(NORTON RECORDS/PO Box 646 COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, N.Y. 10276)



GINO WASHINGTON

"Out Of This World" CD

Semi-legendary Sixties soul dynamo GINO WASHINGTON put out some fine 45s in his day. A large figure in the Detroit music scene for a brief time. He was the only non-Motown performer to do the review tours and even headlined over the ROLLING STONES on one of their early U.S. dates. Compare to a less refined JACKIE WILSON. A great singer who had some great tunes. Good to see Norton stepping up and chronicling a career that might be lost in obscurity without. (JC)

(NORTON RECORDS/PO Box 646 COOPER STATION/NEW YORK, NY 10276)



WEAKLINGS

"Just The Way We Like It" CD

There is a huge scene going on now reviving the 70's JOHNNY THUNDERS dream. Some are lame, some totally rock. The WEAKLINGS are the latter, with an authentic swagger and big beefy guitars. Reminds us that AC/DC also did some fine rock 'n' roll in the 70's. (JC)

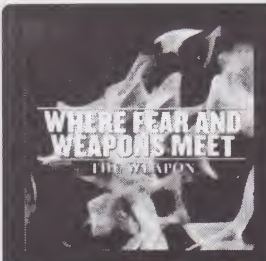
(JUNK/PO Box 1474/CYPRESS, CA 90630)



WHERE FEAR AND WEAPONS MEET

"The Weapon" CD

Fifteen songs that are so damn hardcore that it makes your neck twist. Unfortunately, this is not my field of expertise. In my opinion, all the songs sound similar, fast, gruff, and over the top. Not the hardcore sound I remember as a younger person, but then again, they probably pull in large numbers when they play, so to hell



REVIEWS

with this review. (JM)

(REVELATION/PO Box 5232/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA. 92615-5232)

WHITTINGTONS

"I'm Young, Dumb, & Full Of Cum" 7"

Lo-fi noisy trashed out rock n' roll. Songs are catchy and rock at a good upbeat tempo. The title track and "Fill Your Hole" seem to be the WHITTINGTONS answer to GG, with similar execution. I would say just go buy this, but an Italian import limited to 300 copies might not just be sitting at your local Tower Records. Good luck! (BAM)

(GOODBYE BOOZY/VIA VILLA POMPETTI 147/4020 S. NICOLA ATORDINO TERAMO ITALY)

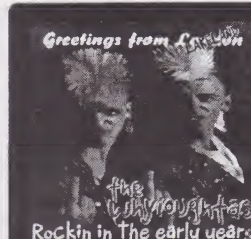


WHYIOUGHTAS

"Rockin In The Early Year" CD

"This record is a collection of almost everything we wrote in our first year of existence." Wait a minute, who are you guys again? I thought "early years" collections were reserved for established bands who run out of new material and need to make a buck. Get famous and addicted to some sort of narcotic, and then maybe this will be interesting. (JER)

(CORE-UP/20 SHAWNEE WAY SW/CALGARY, ALBERTA/CANADA T2Y 2V4)



WILDERBEASTS

"The Lairds Of The Boss Racket" 7" EP

Garage rock in the vein of the LYRES or the SIR DOUGLAS QUINET. Chunky primitive sound. Features cool covers of EYES and



SHITLIST

LINK WRAY. (JC)

(CORDUROY RECORDS AND DETECTIVE AGENCY/41 FELLOWS ST./KEW VICTORIA, CANADA)

WILLHAVEN "WHVN" CD

Super heavy. Metal in a bit of an artsy mood. Cool radio theme running through the material from a neat layout to interesting effects within the tracks themselves.

Intelligent lyrics both personal and esoteric. This is heavy metal for the thinking man. Would be a good match to open up for NEUROSIS or the DEFTONES. (JC)



will haven

(REVELATION/PO Box 5232/HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92615)

WISECRACK

Nothing new here. Musically, a cross between NO USE FOR A NAME, BLINK-182 and "Hoss"-era LAG WAGON with a singer who seems to wish he was somewhere between Joey Cape and Tony Sly but ends up sounding like an out of tune Spike Slawson. I mean, I love LAG WAGON and NO USE, but the first DIVIT LP runs that fine line much better (a caveat, I designed the DIVIT LP and they're friends of mine, but in terms of new skatepunk in the late 90's, their "Low Speed Chase" runs circles around this record). There's some cool musical changes happening in parts, but this isn't something I'm going to be compelled to listen to after I'm done reviewing it. (DGJ)



(SPAWNER/PO Box 93046/LANGLEY, B.C./V3A 8H2 CANADA)

WITCHERY

"Dead, Hot and Ready"

Okay, I should probably admit something here. When I was fifteen years old, I was in a band

called CYNICAL THREAT. We worshipped the ground IRON MAIDEN walked on, ate, slept, and breathed METALLICA trivia, and oh - we generally sucked. During this time, I accumulated a massive amount of Metal Knowledge which I will now put to use judging this record: WITCHERY actually occasionally manage to rock - mainly when they lay back and pile on the MÖTORHEAD riffs. Unfortunately, they spend too much time wishing they were SLAYER - too much double bass. The little blurb on the back of the promo CD says many people are calling them a MAIDEN for the next millenium. The day I give 'em that is the day they manage to find a singer as good as Bruce Dickinson (or Paul DiAnno for that matter) and write a song anywhere close to as good as "The Prisoner." "Number of the Beast", this isn't. (DGJ)

(NECROPOLIS/PO Box 14815/FREMONT, CA 94539-4815)

WONTONS

"Extra Spicy" 7" EP

Great record by a band that I have never heard of before. Reminds me of super-old school stuff like The URINALS or SACHARINE TRUST, with a bit of a garage feel. Check these guys out, they're a blast. (JC)

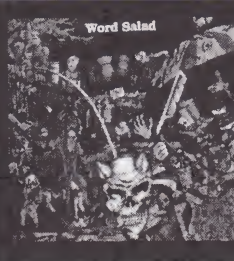
(PEEKABOO/PO Box 49542/AUSTIN TX 78765)



WORD SALAD

"Death March 2000" CD

"Frantic" was the first word that came to mind. Musically, WORD SALD is heavy and fast; at times, difficult to follow in their frenetic metal flurry. Erratic and quirky. Definitely not something to listen to if you want to relax. This CD makes me



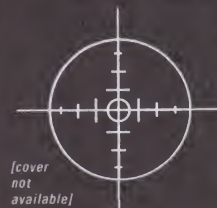
feel nervous. (AD)

(PRANK RECORDS/P.O. Box 410892/SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94141-0892)

X-RAYS

"Snake River Leap" EP

The cover art has a scary snake - which is appropriate. This is some groovy, snaky music. Fans of the RAMONES would like this. (BB)



(SONIC SWIRL RECORDS/PO Box 110303/LAKEWOOD, OH 44107)

X-RAYS

"Whores Are Cool" 7" EP

Fuck yeah! 7"s I like this rule. Pounding bass, driving drums, buzz-saw guitars, gnarled vocals and a picture of a nice girl butt on the cover. Cool. (JC)



(SADDLE TRAMP/PO Box 5412/NOTTINGHAM, NG1 6HT, UK)

MICHAEL YONKERS

"Micro Miniature Love" 7"

A record done in '68. From the liner notes it seems this guy was a real freako. He walked into a studio with a makeshift band and customized guitar wrapped in tin foil with giant red knobs, antennas and dials. This guy thought he was from Mars!! The music is alright, though I like the story much better. Since I don't know if Yonkers did anything else, I hope he disappeared after this session and never recorded again - now that would be a story!

(GET HIP/P.O. Box 666/CANNONBURG, PA 15233)

MICHAEL YONKERS



YOUNG HASSELHOFFS

"Foibles and Follies" 7" EP

Four blasts of fast, fun, energetic pop punk from these fresh faced youngsters, not unlike MTX. I like the poppy stuff, and this doesn't disappoint; pretty cool. (JER)

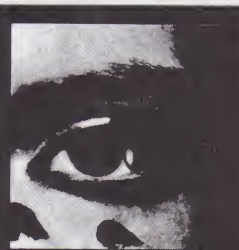


(FAR OUT/PO Box 14361/Ft. LAUDERDALE, FL 33312)

ZAO

"Save Yourself From Hell" CD

Looks like mainstream alternative; reads Christian (especially the thanks list); sounds heavy as fuck. Like the DEFTONES meet MINISTRY. I am not altogether sure how I feel about this record; kinda scary. If you're into the heavier shit, check it out and see for yourself. (JC)



(SOLID STATE/PO Box 12698/SEATTLE, WA 98111)

ZYMOTICS

"Eddie's Random Bombing" 7" -EP

I recognize these people from Nagoya, Japan's "Bou Sou Nezumi". I guess this is their new band. 77/78 style new wave punk rock with girl/boy vocals. It's not bad - with songs like "I'm a Plastic" and "Break the Radio" and you can't go wrong. Fans of the REGISTRATORS and other Jap punk rock will dig this. (TL)



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8th	San Diego, CA	Casbah
9th	Costa Mesa, CA	Club Mesa
10th	San Francisco, CA	Cocodrie
11th	Eureka, CA	Vista
12th	Silverdale, WA	Old Town Tavern*
12th	Seattle, WA	Zach's*
13th	Missoula, MT	Jay's Upstairs
14th	Bozeman, MT	Filling Station
15th	Cheyenne, WY	TBA
19th	Fort Collins, CO	Starlight
20th	Denver, CO	15th Street Tavern

Supporting their new s/t LP/CD.

Refer to their website for updates.

<http://www.forttanger.com>

*The Silverdale show is a matinee and the Seattle show is late night.

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November 1999

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12th	Wichita, KS	Kirby's
13th	Ft. Collins, CO	Starlight
14th	Denver, CO	15th St. Tavern
16th	San Diego, CA	Casbah
17th	Los Angeles, CA	The Joint
18th	San Francisco, CA	Cocodrie
19th	Eureka, CA	Vista
20th	Portland, OR	T.B.A.
21st	Seattle, WA	Breakroom
22nd	Missoula, MT	Jay's Upstairs
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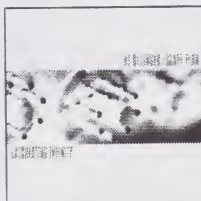
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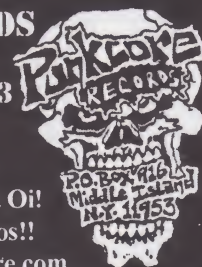
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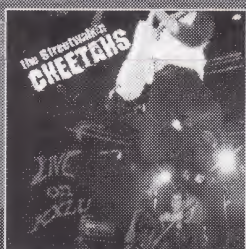


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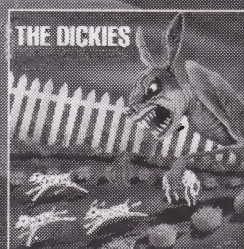
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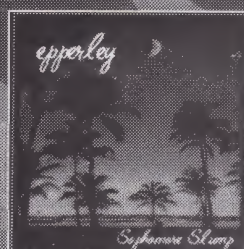
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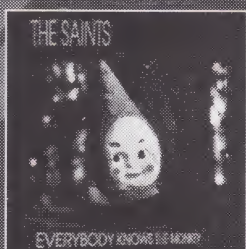
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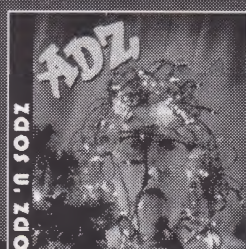
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DOGS FROM THE HARE THAT BIT US



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SOPHOMORE SLUMP



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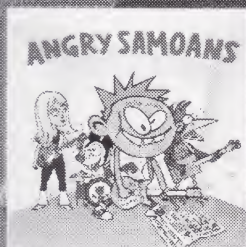
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ODZ 'n SODZ



JEFF DAHL
ALL TRASHED UP



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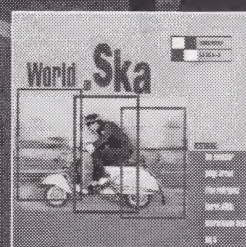
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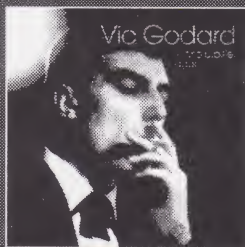
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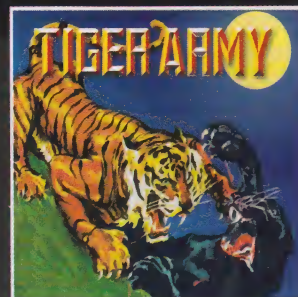
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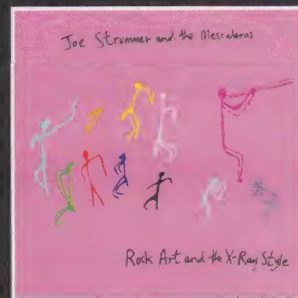


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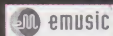
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